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ITS MEANS AND METHODS

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PREFACE

THE principal aim of these Addresses is sufficiently stated in the first of them. I have thought it better to print them in the order of their rational relation rather than in that of their delivery, but I believe that in all cases they can be easily identified by those who first heard them. To avoid unnecessary repetition some passages have been omitted, and if it be thought by any that this process might with advantage have been carried further, I can only plead, that the great practical importance of some subjects seemed to me to justify more than one reference to them.

These Addresses are to me the memento of a busy and happy period of my episcopate, and I trust they may also recall the memory of pleasant and profitable hours to many of the clergy and laity of my diocese.

J. MANCHESTER

BISHOP'S COURT, MANCHESTER

18th April, 1894

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SCHEME OF VISITATION

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE duties of a bishop towards the clergy are twofold; he has to help and to superintend them. He can assist them in many ways: by counsel, by direction, by teaching, by example, by suggesting and initiating work, by calling out the activity and liberality of their people. If, however, his functions correspond in any considerable degree to his name, the *Ἐπίσκοπος*, or overseer, should be largely engaged in the work of superintendence. To give up one year out of four to the discharge of this necessary duty would not appear from this point of view to be excessive. I have thought it well, therefore, to devote the principal part of the current year to the execution of this task.

But here the question naturally arises, How can this work be best and most usefully done?

I conducted the last visitation of this diocese in the ordinary manner by calling together the clergy and laity to hear an address from the bishop, and to make to him such presentments as might be

lawful and necessary. It appeared to me, however, that this method of visitation in no way answered to the true purpose of the act. It was not perhaps defective legally and in itself, but rather because of a want of practical preparation. The bishop did not by this method of visitation acquire the knowledge which it is the primary purpose of this function to give him; nor did the clergy receive that help and direction which they may naturally look for as a consequence of it. Charges which are not based upon particular and personal inquiry must rather relate to matters which affect the whole Church than to those which affect the clerks specially visited; and now at any rate such general questions are best dealt with at diocesan conferences, where the bishop can have the help and counsel of those of the clergy and laity who represent the diocese. I have determined, therefore, so far to revert to the original custom of the Church, as to prepare for my visitation of the several rural deaneries by a personal inquiry into the state and circumstances of each parish in the diocese.

I have carried out that intention in the Cathedral Rural Deanery. I have visited each parish in it. I have seen with my own eyes the state of each church, school, mission-room, and parochial institution. Whenever it was possible I have addressed the children of our schools, and such of the parishioners, male and female, as have come at the summons of the clergy to meet me. I have represented to the clergy and their lay helpers—paid and voluntary—

what appeared to me to be defective in the machinery or administration of their parochial organisation; and in return I have received from them full information upon the difficulties with which they have to contend, and upon the measures which they are adopting in order to grapple with these difficulties. As a consequence of this exhaustive method of inquiry, I feel that I know thoroughly the excellences and defects of all your parishes; that a further knowledge of your difficulties has not only cut off the occasion of what might have been too hasty blame, but has given me a deep feeling of sympathy with obscure parish priests who are struggling bravely with terrible difficulties, and labouring patiently out of sight with the hope of no reward beyond the approval of their Divine Master. You know, my brethren, that I have been faithful with you. If I thought I saw defects in your work I have not hesitated to tell you so. But I hope I have not led you to think me a hard critic, whose purpose was to find fault and to humiliate better men than himself. God knows that I have had but one purpose—to help you to be better ministers of Jesus Christ, better pastors of His sheep and lambs, more beloved by the members of your flock, and more honoured by those who are without. I have little power to utter the deepest feelings of my heart, but once for all let me say, that often in the course of my visitation I have felt a sympathy which I could not utter, and a love for those who were so nobly show-

ing their love for Christ which I could not express. My advice, my suggestions, my expostulations were kindly meant even when perhaps from human infirmity they might be harshly expressed.

Certainly my ideal of a well-managed town parish is a high one. I do not ask you, as do some of your unreasonable critics, to undertake the work of the statesman and politician. Not yours the office to declaim against the injustice of laws and the inequity of their administrators. When your Master was asked, by a man whose thoughts rose no higher than his temporal fortunes, to compel his brother to divide the inheritance with him, you remember His answer : " Who made Me a judge or a divider over you ? " It is quite true that, as ministers of a holy God, we cannot be indifferent to the claims of justice and mercy wherever they may lawfully be urged ; but it is not less true that our first concern is less with the *pecuniary* than with the *spiritual* interest of human life. Nothing less than this was the meaning of our Lord's exhortation : " Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Men too often overlook the rational bond which binds together the two clauses of this exhortation. We should do no great violence to the words if we read them thus : " By seeking the kingdom of God, ye shall add all these things to your life." Make the principle of Christ's love a regulating power in a man's character, and of necessity he will *become* just and merciful in all the

relations of his life—whether as sovereign or subject, master or servant, capitalist or labourer. Without love in the heart the best schemes of statesmen and politicians will fail, as they have failed a thousand times. Selfishness can convert justice into a hardship, and mercy itself into a minister of idleness and vice.

Our work as ministers of the Gospel is thus at once the necessary pre-requisite of any successful reform in the sphere of politics, and the inevitable fountain of such reform. Not the less, however, it is peculiarly in the sphere of man's spiritual, moral, and social life that our work is mainly to be done. We have to lift up before men's eyes, in our teaching and by our example, that Life of Christ which should stimulate them to all holy activities; and we have to withdraw them by means of lawful counter-attractions from such habits and company as are hurtful or hostile to that life. It is from this point of view that I have constructed my ideal of parochial organisation.

For teaching you require the ordinary ministrations of the Word and Sacraments, with such provision of special services and classes as the character, the attainments, or the circumstances of your parishioners may require. There should, I think, be a provision of special teaching in every parish for communicants. These so far differ in their character and attainments from the ordinary members of your congregation, that it will be profitable to present divine truth to them in a special form,

while at the same time the very calling together of those who have advanced to a closer union with their Lord will naturally promote among them a holier fellowship, and evoke a more tender fraternal sympathy. Again, there are those in our parishes who fall as much below the spiritual standard of a general congregation as the communicants rise above it, and for these, too, as it seems to me, there should be special teaching provided. The indifferent and irreligious are not likely to be attracted by our ordinary services. It is for such more especially that we hold our missions; and I think it would be greatly to their advantage if in another form we multiply such missions and make them parochial. The best seasons for such missionary efforts appear to me to be the Church's seasons of Lent and Advent. At the former we are specially reminded of the deadliness of sin and the power of temptation, while at the latter the Church sets before us the great eschatological truths of death, judgment, and the eternal issues of our life. These are the very subjects which should be pressed home on the minds of the careless, and they are the subjects which are likely to be made impressive and attractive by the help of specially qualified ministers.

Once again, I think that there ought to be in every properly appointed town parish, institutions which will stimulate Christians to an imitation of the self-sacrificing service of their Great Master. There

should be a District Visiting Society to enlist the active pastoral sympathies of all those who by some degree of self-sacrifice can bring the invitations and promises of the Gospel to the homes of the ignorant or careless. There should be a band of lay teachers to conduct services in the mission-room. There should be a branch of the Girls' Friendly Society to interest Christian women in the spiritual training and social welfare of their own sex; and there should be a Mothers' Meeting, or branch of the Mothers' Union, to furnish to Christian matrons of piety and experience, the opportunity of leavening the home life with the truths, principles, and comforts of the Gospel. I have said nothing about the blessings which such institutions are naturally adapted to diffuse among their members:—not because I forget them, but because I am speaking rather at present of the necessity of calling out efforts of Christian self-denial.

Again, there should be in every parish the means of withdrawing our young men more especially from evil habits and company. Some of these young men are studious and thoughtful, and for them it will be useful to have literary or dramatic clubs, or, where that is possible, educational institutes. I fear, however, that it will be difficult to sustain the interest of the majority of working youths in the objects of such institutions. Hard work produces weariness, and creates the desire in most men rather for amusement than study. Such a desire is perfectly

innocent, and should meet with healthy opportunities of satisfaction. We ought not to measure the needs and cravings of others by our own tastes and capacities. What may be pleasant and interesting to us may be dull and irksome to them. If then, for instance, we see that our young men are ready to incur all the risks of the public-house and of the society of its frequenters in order to indulge their passion for a game of billiards, we ought in my judgment to provide them with the means of satisfying their craving in our club-room. It is easy by direct prohibition, and by adopting a particular method of payment for the use of the tables, to exclude all overt gambling:—and if gambling be excluded there can be no more harm in a game of billiards than in a game of cricket.

It is with such a standard of parochial excellence as I have attempted to describe that I have ventured to compare the work and organisation of the various parishes of this Rural Deanery.

There was only one parish in it where all the desirable elements of a parochial organisation were combined; and there was only one I am glad to say where, outside the ordinary services of the Church, they were all wanting. In nine cases out of ten several of those elements were included in the scheme of work, and often it seemed as if the omission of a few were made up by the increased efficiency of those which remained. One fact should here especially be mentioned. The work done in

this Rural Deanery is far better than the report of it in Canon Burnside's Year Book—the best and most comprehensive report of the Church's work which we possess. Sometimes the work done in a parish was quite twice as extensive as that reported. In some cases I am constrained to say that this arose from simple carelessness, but generally it was caused either by an honourable disposition not to appear too boastful, or by a misapprehension of the meaning of the inquiry, or by a suspicion that the headings of the inquiry did not precisely describe the work done. This last source of ambiguity and perplexity I hope to get removed. All that is necessary is the insertion in the report of another column of inquiry with the heading "Other Organisations."

In this Rural Deanery some of the central parishes with their scanty and poor populations offer peculiar difficulties and discouragements to the clergy; but commonly these discouragements are confronted by a patient perseverance in well-doing and a careful and diligent use of the scanty means at command, which are as cheering as they are admirable. And in general, I am glad and proud to say that the Church is doing better and more honest work in this Rural Deanery than any report has hitherto recorded, or than any one would discover whose examination was less minute and searching than that which I have just carried out. In many of these parishes I have found laymen whose self-denying labours are quite heroic, and whose lofty

character must be an inspiration to all who know them. And my brethren of the clergy seem to me to be in the main actuated by an exceptionally unworldly purpose to do their duty for Christ's and for duty's sake. We none of us, my brethren, fix the payments which we receive for our work; nor should we any of us give a thought to those payments, except to take heed that we so dispose of them as to pay our honest debts, and to do our utmost to help God's work and His poor. Whether we are well paid or ill paid, ay, or even unpaid, we have all one plain duty before us:—to do all that lies in our power to make men *know* Christ and *love* Him, and *follow* Him. How much of this kind of work lies in our power only love is likely to discover. But sure I am that if we love Christ with all our heart, fresh means of fulfilling our duty will continually suggest themselves, until by self-forgetting and never-resting efforts we shall have brought every man in our parishes into some sort of touch with the life of the Church of God.

In some of the parishes the work of the Church is greatly helped by such admirable auxiliary agencies as the gymnasium in Every Street, which is due to the liberality of Francis Greg, Esq., and the Manchester Art Museum in the same parish. This latter institution is especially to be commended as furnishing the means, through its beautiful pictures and art education, of refreshing the minds and refining the tastes of the working classes of Ancoats. That its

exhibitions and labours are appreciated by those for whom they are provided is manifest from the large number of persons—no fewer than 36,000—who visited the Museum last year. There are other excellent institutions of this character which might be mentioned, and there is only one such which appears to be doing harm by the sceptical character of its teaching.

It is gratifying to me to be able to report that in several parishes the late Manchester and Salford Mission has been the means of stimulating God's people to fresh and enlarged exertions for the spiritual benefit of their neighbours, no fewer than fifty district visitors having been gained through its influence in one parish which previously had none. Another fact also, I think, should be mentioned. Several of the clergy in this Rural Deanery live too far away from their parishes. The true remedy for this undesirable state of things is to be found in the provision of parsonages for all within the area of their parishes, and meantime the non-resident clergy should seek residences nearer to their cures. It is not, however, our own clergy only who are defaulters in this respect. There is a large area in this Rural Deanery containing many Protestant Nonconformist places of worship without any resident minister of those denominations. Within that area I need not say that all the pastoral work of the Christian minister has to be done either by our own clergy or by the resident Roman Catholic priests.

It is interesting to know that in one poor Mission Hall, quite hidden away in an obscure corner of the parish of S. Thomas Redbank, there is a Communion Table, which was placed there by the daughter of Charles Dickens to the memory of her illustrious father, and that in another parish, that of St. Barnabas, there is a very handsome service of Communion plate costing £100, which was purchased by a poor woman with a legacy which she unexpectedly received, and which was presented with all the love of her heart to the Church of her dear Lord.

The work of inspection which I have undertaken is very laborious, but it is brightened by such facts as these ; and I close this, the first page of the report of my visitation, with hearty and unfeigned thanks to Almighty God for the many proofs of Christian love and zeal which He has already permitted me to witness.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I HAVE finished my visitation of the thirty-four parishes of this Rural Deanery (Blackburn), and I am glad to congratulate you on the general average of the work in it. With few exceptions the parishes of Blackburn and the neighbourhood have been divided into workable districts, and I am glad to say that none of them are more energetically and successfully managed than one or two of the very largest. There are more communicants' unions here than in some of the neighbouring districts, and I do not find a general neglect of any important branch of a complete parochial organisation.

In many of the parishes life has been visibly quickened by your late mission; and if only the continuing labour of the clergy and faithful laity be not wanting, our spiritual gains may be secured and even increased. Let us not forget, however, that the most difficult work, that which most severely tries the patience, endurance, and self-sacrifice of God's people, is that which follows the mission, and which has for its object the confirming of holy

resolves, the deepening of new-born emotions, and the gradual sanctification of the character, purposes, and life.

I have found in the northern towns of this Diocese that there are some good, earnest and active, but as I believe mistaken, men, who are introducing regrettable disorders, and a spirit of unchristian censoriousness, by disseminating wrong ideas about the Scriptural meaning of the Christian Church. That Church as it is described in Holy Scripture is always a visible body consisting of the good and evil, of those who are more, and those who are less spiritually minded. Canon Sadler's statement is unquestionably true that "no interior or invisible Church within this outward body is ever recognised in God's word as a *separate* Church."

No one denies that within the visible Church there is a Church of true believers, who alone constitute the spiritual members of Christ ; but then, it is to be held not less firmly, that none knows the true limits of this Church but He who knows all things. Nay, more ; in the Parable of the Tares our Saviour has distinctly forbidden His rash and over zealous servants to attempt the task of separation. Tares and wheat are both to be allowed "*to grow together*" in the same field, undistinguished except by their fruits. Nor is any one rashly to precipitate the time of outward separation, even on the ground of his own judgment of the nature of the fruits. Tares and wheat are to grow together until the

harvest, till the end of the age. Nor is the office of discrimination committed even then to the human servants of the owner, but rather to the angels. Over and over again does St. Augustine cite this parable to rebuke the schismatical pride of the Donatists; nor is it conceivable, had human nature been less arrogant and uncharitable than it is, that in the teeth of this solemn warning and prohibition, men calling themselves Christians could have dared to make themselves judges of their brethren. When a commandment of our Saviour is thus clear and unmistakable there is no need to ask the reasons of it; albeit, reasons enough will not fail to suggest themselves when we begin to reflect. We are not fit to be judges; and those of us are perhaps least fit who are most tempted to assume the office.

Young Christians, or recent converts, or men of a narrow intellect, are commonly so transported by the value of some truth which they partially discern, or have recently embraced, that they cannot believe there is room or excuse for views which are different from their own. Men must think as they do, feel as they do, live as they do, or they cannot be Christians. Age, and larger knowledge, and wider experience may by God's mercy correct these hasty and uncharitable conclusions, but for the time, so long as they persist, they will do serious mischief to the character of those who hold them, making them bitter, uncharitable, and narrow-minded, and so robbing them of the charity which thinketh no evil,

which beareth all things, believeth all things, *hopeth* all things. And not unfrequently, as we may observe every day, such persons unconsciously display their want of this central Christian grace by their harsh judgment of others, and by the coarse and violent language in which such judgments are expressed. To themselves they may seem to be plucking up tares, but to those who know anything of the loving kindness of Christ they will appear to be doing nothing else but rooting up the wheat with them.

There is yet another danger in this arrogant assumption of the office of judge; the danger of casting out those who, though for the present tares, may by the agency of the sun and rain of God's grace be converted ere long into wheat. Who are we to anticipate our brethren's end, to abridge their opportunities of grace, or to cut short the period of their repentance? Let those take heed who are so ready with their bitter words of denunciation, lest in their rooting up of tares they lose their own title to be considered wheat, and occupy that place at last which they presume to assign to-day to their brethren. Once more, while we are seeking for the probable reasons of our Lord's command, we may discern another, in the danger of creating or stimulating the spirit of division.

He that will have none for his fellow Christians but such as seem to him to be led by the Spirit of God, will be tempted, by means of successive

excisions, to form a Church after his own mind, blinding himself all the time; first, to the obvious fact that he is making himself the standard of holiness, and secondly, to the fact equally obvious, that to preserve some satisfaction in his own narrow sect, he is wilfully or unconsciously overlooking defects of mind and heart in himself and his co-sectaries at which all the world is laughing or grieving. If it were not so pitiful it would be truly ludicrous to see such people aping humility by acts of arrogance, and commending charity by words of anger and contempt.

Surely in such considerations as these we can discern reasons enough for our Lord's command; or if we want further assurance of its scope and necessity we shall not fail to find it in the practice of the Apostle Paul. The first Epistle to the Corinthians may convince us that when there was overt scandal in the Church, none was less slack than he in the ministration of salutary discipline. But when the faults to which he referred were rather inward than outward, rather of feeling and opinion than of outward and notorious acts, then he displayed in his conduct that large grand charity which he so eloquently commended. There were errors of opinion in the Christian Church at Corinth—errors even on so fundamental a doctrine as the Resurrection of Christ; there were also serious aberrations of feeling, aberrations so serious that he accuses those who entertained them of being “fleshly” and of

“walking as men.” And yet it is this whole mixed community which he addresses as “the Church of God at Corinth,” styling them as a body, “those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called, saints.” If ever there was a Church in the world, in which the state of feeling and opinion would have justified the separation of an inner from the outward Church, surely that Church was the one to which this letter was addressed. And yet, not even in this case will St. Paul depart from the commandment of his Divine Master. Not *his* the task to separate the wheat from the chaff, to cut short the opportunity of repentance, to anticipate the discrimination of the end.

Clear, however, as the conclusion seems to be, as well from the teaching of our Lord as from the example of His Apostles, that no outward separation should be made between those who are true and those who are hypocritical believers, between those who are, and those who are not, effectively and secretly led by the Spirit, yet so intolerable has this conclusion appeared to the Donatists and Separatists of every age, that all kinds of efforts have been made to discredit it. What! it has been objected, can there be “carnalists” and “hypocrites” in that Church of God which is called the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Ghost?

Obviously the same objection would lie to St. Paul’s usage of the title “saints” or “the sanctified

in Christ Jesus," as applicable to the members of the Church of Corinth. What! it might be asked, can there be carnal saints? Can we rightly call those who walk according to men "the sanctified in Christ Jesus?" The answer is that the Apostle does so: and that therefore it was his habit to think of the invisible Church as included in the visible: and to give to the visible Church those high titles which a community that contained the true saints of God might rightly claim.

The alternative was, and is, that some man or men should be able to make a sharp separation between those who are really and those who are only nominally believers in Christ. And as we have seen, no man is able or fit to do that: nay, the very effort to do it cannot but create far greater evils than it seeks to remedy.

Further, we may ask what is there in the nature of these images to exclude the unworthy from being comprised under them? May not a body contain diseased members without ceasing to be a body? May not a temple contain unspiritual worshippers without ceasing to be a temple? May not a bride have evil tempers and dispositions without ceasing to be a bride? Oh, but it is sometimes urged, it is not merely the nature of the Scriptural metaphors, but much more that spiritual *fact* of union with Christ which they represent, which seems to us to exclude unworthy members from God's Church. I answer, there is one figure in the New Testament which

brings out the fact of that spiritual union with Christ quite as clearly as that of the Body. It is the figure of the Vine and the branches, set forth by our Lord Himself in the 15th chapter of St. John's Gospel. And in this passage at least there is no possibility, as it seems to me, of misunderstanding the meaning. "I am the Vine," our Lord says, "and ye are the branches." Can the fact of real union be more clearly stated? And yet he adds: "Every branch *in Me* that beareth not fruit, He taketh it away." There may then be fruitless branches still *in* the true Vine. The fruitless branch had once a *vital* union with the Spiritual Vine. For long it had a real but imperfect union. It is only at last, when the union is one of mere appearance, that the branch is taken away. But who takes it away? Not man but the *Father*. He who alone can accurately determine not only when the union is but a seeming union, but also when it is hopeless that it should become anything else.

Excellent on this subject are the remarks of Calvin. "There is a dangerous temptation," he says, "to deem nothing the Church which falls short of perfect purity." But he asks, "What reason had St. Paul for recognizing the Church of God at Corinth? Because he discerned among them" (not perfect purity, not the absence of spot or stain, but) "the doctrine of the Gospel, baptism, and the supper of the Lord, by which symbols the Church ought to be distinguished." This is the same test as that set

forth in our Church's own definition : " The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men " (not in which there is no error or imperfection), but " in which the pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance." Now can any of us venture to deny that we find in the Church of our fathers a Scriptural faith, an Apostolic form of worship, and such provision for discipline as shall effectually exclude notorious offenders ? If not, then what excuse can any one find for fomenting divisions amongst us ? Christianity without love is a body without a soul, yea, it is a veritable monstrosity. And what love can there be amongst those who, separating themselves as far as possible from their brethren, encourage others to regard them with feelings of bitterness, or to speak of them in terms of denunciation ? Such persons are clearly doing all they can to create and perpetuate division, and to frustrate that grand aspiration of our Divine Master " that they all may be one, that the world may believe."

But now, in the next place, if we have obtained a true idea of the real nature of the Church, we shall be able not only to avoid the carnal spirit of schism, but also to gain a clear conception of the office of the Church in the economy of redemption. The Church has a definite relation to the life, the worship, and the faith of her members. She watches over the purity of Christian life by the administration of a wholesome discipline. If any of her members be

guilty of open and notorious sin whereby he becomes an offence to believers, or if any having quarrelled with his neighbour refuses to forgive him on his acknowledgment of wrong-doing and profession of repentance, then she directs the clergyman, having done what he can to bring the wrong-doer to a better mind, to repel him from the Lord's Table till he has given proof of repentance. Only to take away any suspicion of mistake, or partial dealing, the clergyman so repelling any is required to give an account of what he has done to the Ordinary "within fourteen days at the furthest." This surely is as far as our Divine Master has permitted us to proceed in the necessary ministration of godly discipline.

Can any one desire the Church to become a spy on the private life of her members, or to attempt the dangerous, and indeed impossible, task of determining the inward spiritual state of those who profess to believe in Christ? If not, then assuredly he should be satisfied that the Church has done all which she can lawfully attempt to correct by discipline the disorders of Christian life.

But again, the Church has a definite relation to Christian worship. She has power, as our article reminds us, "to decree rites and ceremonies." This power is inherent in her very nature, and its exercise is all the more necessary because so little is determined in Holy Scripture in this connection. Christ's Church is intended to embrace the whole family of man, and having regard to the immense diversities

of circumstance and spiritual capacity in those who were to be her subjects, room is left, as we might expect it would be left, for considerable variety in forms of worship. Who then is to determine what these forms shall be? Who is to judge what forms of prayer, what diversities of garb and posture, and the like, are most suitable and edifying in a particular age and civil community? Surely the Church of that civil community, that faithful body of men within the same, which is the Temple of the Holy Spirit in its midst, the inheritor therein of the Lord's gracious promise, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Some things, no doubt, there are which are necessary—which the Church cannot alter—as the faithful preaching of the Gospel, and the due administration of the Sacraments. But "rites and ceremonies" are among the things comparatively indifferent, and to rebel against the Church's determinations in respect to such matters is to encourage the spirit of schism, and to sin against Christian charity. Once more, the Church has a definite relation to Christian truth. The Apostle Paul commanded Titus to rebuke false teachers sharply that they might be sound in the faith:—and those that were heretical after a first and second admonition to refuse. But it is clear that if the Church is to be able to execute this part of a godly discipline she must be able to distinguish true doctrine from false, and as "the pillar and ground of the truth" to "have authority in controversies of faith."

Nor does this prerogative of the Church conflict in any wise with a properly defined liberty of private judgment. The appeal as to truth, must always be in the last instance to every man's private intelligence. To impose the reception of truth by force, is to do violence to the Divinely appointed constitution of man, and to punish as obstinate those who, like the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures daily, whether these things be so. The Church's only lawful weapon is persuasion; but not the less can she legitimately claim *authority* when private judgments differ, and controversy arises on the true meaning of the Word of God. Her authority, indeed, is not that of the legislator, but of the judge. The law is to be sought, not in the Church, but in the Word of God. There alone is to be found the revelation of Divine truth, and so our Church defines the limits of the Church's didactic authority thus:—"Yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another." Does this appear to you to be a statement of the Church's authority somewhat difficult to understand? Then remember that the authority claimed is no other than one with which our daily experience makes us familiar.

Every English citizen is made responsible for knowing the law of his country, so really responsible that he is liable to suffer penalties for any breach of it. And yet nothing is more common than mistakes

as to its true meaning. When, then, such mistakes have been made, how do we proceed? We bring the case before a Court of Law, and assign to the judge the task of authoritative interpretation. No one pretends that he can make law, or even that he is infallible in his interpretation thereof. And yet who would deny that his office is valuable and necessary. Without him disputes would never terminate, or only terminate in violent confusion. A like office is that of the Church, and an office, I venture to say, never more necessary and valuable than at the present time.

We find ourselves face to face with vast and unfamiliar accumulations of secular knowledge, knowledge which at first sight seems to be in palpable contradiction to certain parts of Holy Writ. How, then, are private Christians to learn the true relations of this new knowledge with the revelation of God's truth in Christ? It were a mere cruelty to leave the ordinary Christian to wrestle with these difficulties unhelped. But that is not his position. He is a member of that Church which was to be "the pillar and ground of the truth," and it is the office and duty of that Church to assist him in his difficulty. You and I, my reverend brethren, are the Church's appointed ministers in this matter. It is for us to declare in her name what is the true nature of the Divine teaching, what are the inspired contents of the record of that teaching, what is the real relation between secular knowledge and "the faith once

delivered to the Saints." A blessed, but also a most difficult and responsible task. Let no clergyman shrink from it, or spare his own labour in the discharge of it. This is no time for perfunctory work or half-hearted study. Self-sufficient ignorance can only make shipwreck of faith. *Mental* idleness will in our case do wider and more deadly harm than even physical idleness. If we are to meet the wants, direct the thoughts, and confirm the hopes of this most earnest and interesting age, we must devote to our task the best energies of both body and soul. An idle clergyman is an anachronism. He ought to be an impossibility.

Lastly, my reverend brethren, we may discern the value and necessity of the Church's teaching office in connection with her missions to the heathen. If it be unquestionable that the chosen people were only able to learn the highest spiritual truth by slow degrees, in many centuries, how can it be reasonable for us to set Christian truth in its completeness before backward races like the negroes and the aborigines of Australia? It would not be reasonable if we merely sent a message without the living Church to explain and embody it. A book is not enough, if even that book could be read. The Bible without the Church would be to the savage, as I proved for myself in Australia, nothing better than an inexplicable enigma. The very life of Christ itself would seem to such men, in a mere report, as contemptible as it was puzzling. Its gentleness

would seem weakness, its love madness, and its lofty thoughts of God a folly or a dream. If its exacting laws of service and self-sacrifice seem to many in civilized England no better than Utopian counsels of perfection, what must they appear to those who have spent their whole life in selfish conflicts, and whose loftiest ideas of happiness are bounded by the hope of sensual gratification? It is the Church which makes the Gospel possible and credible among such brute-like savages as these. Let the life come to the interpretation of the preaching, let the visible strength and wisdom of the living Christian give itself openly and joyfully to the daily service of the weak and vile, and then the darkest soul in a Hottentot kraal shall feel the charm of the beauty of holiness, and learn to love the Saviour in the gracious charity of His Bride. For savage and civilized alike then, the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth, neither perfect on earth nor infallible but still as necessary in her appointed measure to the manifestation of the Eternal Light, as the Word of God itself is to the revelation of that Light in its Divine fulness.

THE WORLD

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I COMPLETE to-day my visitation of the forty-one parishes of the Rural Deaneries of Prestwich and Eccles. In some of the parishes of the Prestwich Deanery I have found the ecclesiastical organization complete, and the workers, lay and clerical, full of zeal and energy. In these parishes the pulse of spiritual life beats strongly, and the future, so far as man can judge, is full of hope and promise. In many of them however, the need for improvement is obvious, and in two or three is pressing and urgent. It seems to me, I confess, that in some of these a mission is greatly needed, not less to stimulate and encourage the labourers, than to stir up the careless and indifferent.

In many of the parishes of Eccles, I am glad to report that there is a high average of attendance at the Lord's Table. People seem to be shaking off the unscriptural prejudice that none are fit to come to Holy Communion but the most saintly of the Saints, and to be recognizing the true ideal of this sacred ordinance :—that it was instituted not only to be a

commemoration of our Saviour's dying love, but also to be a means of grace to all the faithful. I am sorry, however, to find that in many of the parishes of this Deanery there are no communicants' classes or unions. When we remember the stern battle that has to be fought with the outside world by our young and inexperienced communicants we shall surely feel that it is our first duty, by organizing a union within the brotherhood of the faithful, to afford them support and guidance. If the defection of our young communicants occasions the most serious loss of the Church, who can doubt that the organization of some special means to avert that defection, is amongst the most pressing and obvious of our obligations.

There is one other deficiency in this Rural Deanery which it is impossible to pass over without remark. Except in a small minority of parishes, the clergy are unaided in their pastoral ministrations by district visitors. Nor is this deficiency confined to those parishes which by reason of their small populations might the less appear to need such ministrations. It is equally to be observed, and still more to be deplored in several of those which are largest and most populous. In these last cases especially I think that a vigorous effort should at once be made to arouse the laity to a sense of their duty. Can we wonder that love should grow cold, or that the signs of estrangement between believers and unbelievers should become more distressingly patent, when no

effort is made by those who profess to love the Lord Jesus to carry to the homes of the careless and indifferent the tidings and tokens of the better life? Never will the Church sanctify the world, never will the world press eagerly into the communion of the Church, until, imitating the self-sacrifice of their Divine Master, Christians prove by their devoted labour that they have a deep and real love for the human race.

It may help perhaps to arouse in us a more zealous desire to perform this duty if we try to get a clearer idea of what we mean by the world.

In my last address I called attention to the mistakes which good men often made on the nature of the Church. Not less serious, and not less fruitful in uncharitable judgments, is that which so many make on the Biblical conceptions of the world. To some the world appears all but conterminous with the professing Church. Setting up for themselves a subjective standard of belief and practice, they pronounce all those worldly who seem to them to come short of it. Worldliness is, in their view, to be tested not so much by the spirit in which a man regards earthly gifts, pleasures, and occupations, as by the outward form of his life. This, in their opinion, should exhibit an almost ascetic detachment from all which can be called amusement. A Christian, they think, should never dance, play at cards, or attend theatrical performances. Art itself in all its branches should be looked on with suspicion.

Poetry of a particular kind may perhaps be allowable, but painting and music are to be feared, and works of fiction to be entirely avoided. Those who depart from this rigid puritanical standard are worldly-minded, and it is the duty of the Christian to make no close friendships with them.

In practice there is, no doubt, much elasticity in these requirements. Some modern puritans are *more* and some *less* strict, both in fixing the standard of prohibition, and in their treatment of their fellow Christians. But all, I believe, are equally wrong and unscriptural in their methods of exposition and discrimination. The limits of the world are not, I believe, to be determined by any external lines of demarcation. Practices and amusements which are innocent to some men may be dangerous to others. A style of dress, for instance, which may be becoming in some, will assuredly be injurious to others, fostering in them a vain love of admiration, and attracting the regard of light and dangerous companions. This whole question of what constitutes the world needs, I believe, a very careful re-examination. Let us ask, then, what is meant in Holy Scripture by "the world"?

The Psalmist, we find (Psalm xvii. 14), talks about "men of the world, which have their portion in this life;" thus partly defining what he means by the world. The world in his estimation is clearly the visible creation conceived of in itself as a phenomenon, a satisfaction of sense, a mere appearance apart

from its eternal ground and meaning. The man of the world sees it and loves it sensually, perceiving in it none of those signs of an eternal presence and wisdom and beauty which to the spiritual man constitute its true meaning and preciousness. We may say indeed, in a word, that the world in its widest sense is God's creation empty of God; and that the man of the world is he who so conceives and values it.

To the man of faith, on the contrary, the world is very good, just because he sees in it what the worldling cannot see, the power and wisdom and goodness of the Creator. Like the Psalmist he cries, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein." With Jeremiah he can exclaim, "God hath made the earth by His power, He hath established the world by His wisdom." It is the man of faith who is normally human, and not, as he sometimes proudly calls himself, the man of the world. As the preacher says, "He hath made everything beautiful in His time, also He hath set" (not *the world*) but "*eternity* in their heart." Men were so made by God that they should be capable of seeing His own Eternal Light shining through the beauty of all earthly things, and he alone is the great poet or artist who shows us this light, yea forces it on our dulled vision, as God's interpreter. Sometimes the efforts even of the great poet and artist are in vain, and equally vain the voice of the great prophet or preacher. Men become so utterly creatures of sense

and time that they are stone blind to what is ideal and eternal. Then the only thing which can rouse their dead soul is that which shall strike them through their senses, through that mere world of appearance which is their all. When they will not listen to the whisper of love, God startles them by the thunder of judgment. Isaiah saw this truth, and expressed it in the well-known words, "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."

Such, in a few words, is the Old Testament doctrine of the world; nor is it different in its essential features from that of the New Testament. What difference there is arises mainly from the more exclusively human point of view from which everything in the New Testament is regarded. Sometimes, but rarely, the world means in the New Testament the universal frame of things, as when St. John says in the prologue to his Gospel that "the world was made by the word of God"; or as when our Saviour is reported by St. Matthew as saying, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Generally, however, in the New Testament "the world" is used to denote the human family, or some special part of it. The world has the larger of these two latter meanings when, as by St. Paul, "the whole world" is pronounced "guilty before God"; or when, as by St. John, God is declared to have "so loved the world as to have given His only begotten Son" to save it.

There is, however, another and more special meaning of this word in the New Testament. It is sometimes used to denote that part of the human race which, taking the visible world for its portion, has no eyes for the Divine element in it, shutting its mind against spiritual truth, and hardening its heart against the appeals of God's love. It is of the world in this narrower sense that our Saviour says : " It cannot receive the Spirit of truth, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." It is of the world which liveth without God that He says again to His disciples : " If ye were of the world the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." The world's opposition to the Lord Jesus arose out of His call to it to live in God's love. It closed its ears to that call because it hated the self-sacrificing service which was implied in it. The world wanted to enjoy not to serve ;—to please itself, not to please God :—and therefore it hated Him who summoned it to such service and obedience. The opposition between the world and Christ was thus one of principle. It grew sharper and more violent as years went on, and by the time that St. John wrote his general Epistles—about the close of the first century—it had created such a gulf between the Church and the world that St. John could make the sweeping declaration that " the whole world lay in wickedness." What, then, under such circumstances was the Church's duty

to the world? While executing her Saviour's ministry of redemption towards it, was she to associate with it on terms of amity and good fellowship? The Apostolic reply to this question admits of no doubt whatever. "Come out from among them," cries St. Paul, "and be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing." It is to be observed, however, that these uncompromising words were used, as the context shows, not of unfaithful Christians within the Church, but of heathens outside it. If those who called themselves Christians were known to be guilty of the sins of idolatry or uncleanness they were cast out, delivered over, as St. Paul phrases it, "to Satan," and with such, the Apostle declares that it was not lawful for a Christian "so much as to eat." So long, however, as a man was suffered to continue in the fellowship of the Church, he did not belong to what the Apostle called the world. It was of this pagan world, given over to selfish lusts and pleasures, whose very gods were patrons of uncleanness, that St. John said, "If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him : for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away and the lust thereof."

Much light has been thrown upon the Apostolic conception and treatment of the world by the recent investigations of Professor Ramsay. The world was no doubt a larger idea than that which was represented by the Roman State, and yet it entirely comprised that

State, and in the latter part of the first century found its almost complete expression therein. For not only did the Roman State of that period, as in earlier times, base its whole organization on Roman paganism, but it set forth in the popular Emperor-worship a figure who appeared as the personal opponent of Christ. On the one side appeared the State, on the other the Church ; on the one side the Emperor, on the other side Christ. This opposition, always really existing, became a conscious opposition on both sides after the destruction of Jerusalem. Then the Romans became conscious that they were dealing with an organization which depended for its vitality on no local centre, and no special cult. It was an organization which aimed at universal dominion, which was guided by principles opposed to those of the Empire, and which taught its adherents that when the commands of the State and of the religion came into conflict, they were to disobey the State. Before and even during the Neronian persecution, Christians were condemned not for being Christians, but for crimes of which they were falsely accused. Under the Flavian Emperors, however, and down to the time of Hadrian (when a *rapprochement* between the State and the Church took place), Christians were condemned for being Christians. The common test offered to them was that they should sacrifice to the Divinity of the Emperor—so professing that their religious were subordinate to their civil obligations ; and on their refusal they were condemned to death.

Thus the opposition between the Church and the world—between the pagan and the Christian god—was made sharp, clear, and unmistakable. No man could be a Christian who adhered to the world. It was made clear to every Christian conscience that if any man loved the world, the love of the Father was not in him. It had not been always so. While Christianity was a tolerated sect, St. Paul found protection from the State against his fanatical religious enemies. Accordingly he could say to the Romans that the Emperor was “the minister of God to them for good.” But by the time that St. John wrote the Apocalypse, and still more when he wrote his general Epistles, such a statement had become impossible. The world as represented by the Roman State was the declared enemy of Christ, and it was every Christian’s duty to renounce it. It was a foe, and a foe which had been spiritually overcome, which in God’s purpose was ready to vanish away.

It is impossible to understand the references to the world in the New Testament if these facts be overlooked, and they show us once again the truth of the apparent paradox that he who studies the Bible alone will never understand the Bible. At the same time we must not forget that the world was a larger term than the State. In itself it had a purely spiritual connotation. It represented all those things in the world ; in its treasures, its pleasures, its lusts, which were desired or enjoyed apart from God. For St. Paul, equally with St. John, in the

days *before* Nero, as in those *after* that Emperor, there was an outlying pagan world, Roman and non-Roman, which lay in wickedness and was the foe of the Kingdom of God. So far as Christians loved and sought this world without God, its mere sensual pleasures, possessions, and companionships, they belonged really, whatever their outward position and profession, to the world. The question then to be asked of any Christian was this: not did he addict himself to this or that practice, but did he seek as an object of desire that which he could keep without the consciousness that it was God's good gift to him? No doubt there were some amusements in that age which were in themselves so hopelessly vicious and corrupting (such as the immoral stage-plays and gladiatorial games), that no one could think of them as God's gifts; and for this reason such amusements were to be avoided, not, you will observe, because they were *amusements*, but because they were palpably *ungodly* amusements. I do not doubt that there are many ungodly amusements—amusements on the enjoyment of which it would be blasphemous to ask God's blessing—at the present time. Such amusements are to be denounced and avoided. We must not, however, allow ourselves to be deceived by names. There may be theatrical amusements which are not only a harmless recreation, but a wholesome and ennobling stimulus of the highest thoughts and best feelings. On such we *can* ask God's blessing, ask it even more heartily than we

ask His blessing on manly athletic exercises, and such amusements are not *worldly* in the Scriptural sense. The test to be applied to everything in the world is this: does it help us to feel God's presence? to see His goodness? to give thanks for His love? If it does, it is not of the world. Let us never forget that the world of sense is not in itself evil. The idea that it was so, that it was not the work of God and in itself very good, was the mistake of the Manichæans. It is the logical result of this mistake that we go out of the world, and take as little from it of any kind as will barely keep us alive.

Then the less a man eats and drinks, or enjoys the beauty of the fair earth and bright sky, the better he is. If he can do without the blessings of home, if he can live in a bare cell, or better still in a cave, or on the top of a pillar, he becomes a great Saint—and indeed can be a great Saint on no other terms.

Do you feel that such a conclusion is in fact a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole doctrine of Manichæism, and of abstinence for the sake of abstinence? Then act reasonably. Acknowledge that every gift of God is good, and to be enjoyed so long as it can be consciously received and acknowledged as His. Is it not obvious that from this point of view there may be good novels, good games, good theatrical amusements, good pictures, good statuary, good feasts? Nay, if you come to think of it, does not the effort to see God's wisdom and goodness in all outward things actually make them good to us?

How does art, how does science, exert an elevating influence on our character? By expressing to us more clearly, and more powerfully enforcing on our observation, the signs of God's wisdom and goodness, and of the beauty and harmoniousness of His works than we could gain without such help. Poetry or painting becomes great when it lifts us through the sensible into the eternal. Literature becomes great when through its penetrating thoughts and beautiful form it opens for us through the thick veil of sense glimpses of an ideal world within. Music becomes great when on the wings of its grand harmonies it bears us upward to the throne of God.

Let us then, my reverend brethren, realise what we actually mean by this word "world." We mean sense without insight, enjoyment without thankfulness, desire without love; in a word, the seeking of profit and delight in God's works and gifts, without conscious recognition of the Divine Doer and Giver. If, then, there be anything in this world which reveals God to us; if there be anything, any art, science, amusement, work, or companionship in which we can find God, or for which we can thank God—*that* is lawful to us; and no man may judge his brother.

THE ORDER FOR MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I am glad to be able to congratulate you on the excellent work which is being done by the clergy in many of the parishes of this large Rural Deanery (Whalley). In two or three cases however, affairs, I am sorry to say, are in a deplorable condition, owing mainly to dissensions between the clergy and their congregations. When such dissensions arise, it is very difficult to compose them. The fault is not always on one side ; and if a better state of things is to be ever reached, it must be by a common resolution to seek from God, in fervent prayer, a deeper love of souls, the forgetfulness of past reproaches and misunderstandings, a hearty desire for unity of work and purpose, and the renewal of that brotherly love which has been so sadly eclipsed and interrupted. May the Lord Jesus Christ pour into all our hearts His own Divine spirit of peace and love !

I find that here, as in other parts of Lancashire, there are many of our young people who look upon the senior Bible class not as a preparation, but as a

substitute for public worship. This is not only a mistake and misfortune, but it implies also a very inadequate conception of our position and privileges as baptized members of Christ. Let me then endeavour to set that position before you, and to explain, as far as I can, its connection with our ordinary services for public worship.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are taught that we have one Great High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, who ever liveth, at God's right hand, to make intercession for us. But, says the author of that Epistle, "Every High Priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, wherefore it is necessary that this man also have somewhat to offer." What then does our High Priest continually offer in God's presence for us? "He gave Himself up for us," says St. Paul to the Ephesians, "an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell." Continually, then, in God's presence, our Great High Priest is presenting on our behalf that glorified humanity which, perfected by sacrifice and still bearing the marks thereof ("a Lamb as it had been slain"), is the memorial before our Father in heaven, that His holy law is satisfied, and that man, in Christ, is well-pleasing in His sight. But now, if, as St. Paul teaches, the Church be "His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all," it follows that in some real sense His Church must partake in His office of priesthood. And that it is so, St. Peter assures us when he calls Christians "a holy priesthood," and "a *royal* priest-

hood." Again, if we be, in any real sense, a priesthood, *we* also must have somewhat to offer. What then is that somewhat? St. Peter tells us "we are a holy priesthood to offer unto God spiritual sacrifices." What then are "spiritual sacrifices"? The same Apostle tells us something rather more specific when he says we are "a royal priesthood . . . that we may show forth the excellences of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light." What then, let us ask, are the offerings by which we can "show forth God's excellences"? Plainly we may reflect those excellences in our renewed spirits, and it is in this sense that our Church teaches us in her Communion Service to present "ourselves to God as a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice." Again, we may "show forth God's excellency" by every word and act, in every hour, of our daily lives; and so St. Paul says to the Colossians, "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus," thus, by this doing, "giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."

But once again we may "show forth God's excellency" definitely and expressly, by those words of praise and adoration, in which we commemorate before God, and proclaim to the world, "the honour which is due unto His Name." It is to this public, united, and verbal method of "showing forth God's excellency," that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews refers when he says, "Through Him, then, let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God *continually*,

that is the fruit of lips which make confession to His Name." Most eminently we do this, in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, but hardly less so, when in the appointed order for morning and evening prayer we "speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with our hearts to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God even the Father."

Now it is especially to enable us to perform this high and holy function of the spiritual priesthood that our morning and evening prayers are made such as we find them. They undoubtedly contain the three great elements of Prayer, Teaching, and Praise, but no one can study them closely, with such help as is furnished, for instance, by Freeman's *Principles of Divine Service*, without perceiving that their dominant and determining element is Praise. We come together day by day, not only to pray and learn, but also, and more especially, to worship God, to sing His praises, to proclaim in the midst of a thankless world the wonderful love which has redeemed us from our sins; to provide that from the streams of Praise and Adoration which ascend from the heavenly hosts, the contributions of our highly-favoured humanity shall not be wanting. We do not forget that it is with tainted lips that we come to make our offering. And therefore before we venture to embark on this great enterprise of a spiritual priesthood, we humbly confess our sins, and listen with bowed heads to the

declaration of God's pardon through Christ to all penitent believers. Then having made the transition from prayer to praise, in those words of the Lord's prayer, which are so largely a petition that God may be glorified, we begin our priestly office by the supplication, "O Lord, open thou our lips; and our mouth shall show forth Thy praise."

All being thus made ready, we change our attitude. As we are about to add our songs to those of the jubilant choirs of heaven, we rise to our feet and give glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that blessed Trinity, who has been and is and ever shall be adored for the grand work of redemption. And lest there should be any doubt about the true nature of the priestly work on which we are entering, the minister utters the glad summons, "Praise ye the Lord," and the people answer (would that it were always from the bottom of grateful hearts), "The Lord's name be praised."

Does then the service, let us ask, worthily fulfil this high promise of its beginning, worthily answer to the requirements of that priestly task to which we have been summoned? We cannot at present go beyond the limits of the order for Morning Prayer, but consider carefully, I pray you, the holy wisdom of its order and contents in the light of their declared purpose.

First, after the example of those ancient Eastern services from which our own order is ultimately derived, we begin with a fixed psalm—the Venite.

There can be no doubt that this was a Temple psalm, whether or not we agree with Cheyne that it was composed to celebrate the completion of the second Temple. The Templar Knights selected it as their battle song, and it has been used as the Invitatory psalm in all Western liturgies from a very remote period. How better then can we commence our great priestly sacrifice of praise than by its familiar and jubilant invitation, "O come let us sing unto the Lord, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation." No sooner have its joyous strains died away than we resume them by uplifting with heart and voice the words of a selected portion of those songs of Zion which have furnished the sacred hymnody of all the Christian ages.

Hebrew these undoubtedly are in their tone and colouring, and as various in their mingled elements of complaint, confession, prayer, praise, and adoration, as the circumstances and ages which gave them birth. But what Christian worshipper can complain of allusions with which his study of the Old Testament has made him familiar? or who can regret the sad strains or fervent prayers with which their current of praise is interrupted? who that has sung such hymns as "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide," or "When gathering clouds around I view, and days are dark and friends are few"? Certainly there are psalms so deeply imbued with the old spirit of retributive aspiration,

that they seem to be little fitted to afford expression to Christian feelings and desires. And yet even these, to the intelligent student, are not without their valuable element of instruction, as marking the steps by which the religious feeling was raised from the desire to inflict punishment, to the lofty faith which could leave punishment to God. Such psalms accordingly are less the utterances of Christian emotion than mementoes of that gradual and stately progress of revelation through which, "by divers portions and in divers manners," the law was made "our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." We see, then, as all the greater liturgiologists have remarked, that there is a double element in the Psalms—the golden thread of meditation running through all its many coloured garment of Praise, and thus making this portion of our worship pre-eminently "a reasonable service." Still praise is ever its predominating note, and, as if to emphasize this, the Church has appointed that at the end of every Psalm we shall lift up our voices in the "Gloria Patri." while in the American branch of our Church this may be exchanged at the end of the last Psalm of the morning's course for the longer and more elaborate "Gloria in Excelsis."

The next step in our service is a very noteworthy one. In the Psalms, as we have seen, the elements of praise and meditation were inextricably blended. But now, as if to mark the central purpose of our service with even greater precision and distinctness,

these two elements are separated and sharply discriminated from each other.

We are called upon to sit still and ponder in holy meditation some account of God's redeeming love, first from the Old Testament, and then from the New ; first as suggested or prepared in the history, experience, or prophecy of holy men of old ; and then as explicitly declared and represented in the Holy Gospels, or the inspired writings of Apostles. And how, then, does the Church direct us to receive these floods of sunlight, or gleams of promise, from the records of God's dealings with His Church ? How, but by bursts of adoring praise. " Nothing can be more significant," says Freeman, " than the astonishing universality with which in all offices, all Churches, and all times, the reading of [Scripture] has used to be followed by a burst of praise, in the form of canticle or hymn, or responsory, sometimes of all three." We *hear*, that we may *praise*. We learn the redeeming love of God, that we may adore and celebrate it, dwelling in rapt and joyous strains upon all those high and excellent attributes which shine forth in the life and work of our Redeemer. A hint is enough to suggest the whole : the story of a patriarch, the deed of a monarch, the vision of a prophet, carries us on to the shores of the lake, or the mount of sacrifice, ay, and to that hidden council-chamber of the Infinite Love, in which the great design was eternally planned and determined. And just because each lesson is a

sample and specimen of the vast whole to which it belongs—"a single streak of the cloudless depth of light which beams from the great orb of Scripture"—the *Te Deum* itself, grand hymn as it is, is not too grand to utter our thanksgiving for what we have learnt. We know not who was the author or what is the age of this magnificent anthem. Older than the fifth or sixth century it must be; and oh! how gloriously its words lift our souls to God, as, answering the story of His love, we cry with burning hearts, "We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord." "With cherubim and seraphim, with Apostles, Prophets, and Martyrs above, and with the Holy Church throughout all the world below, we acknowledge Thee to be the holy and adorable Triune Love." "Day by day we magnify Thee, and we worship Thy Name ever, world without end."

Such and so lofty are the strains of praise with which the Church below celebrates the perfections of the Divine Nature, and the triumphs of redeeming love. Nor can we say that the response is less worthy or fitting when, the second lesson over, we answer it in the words of the *Jubilate Deo*. "Among the Psalms of triumph and thanksgiving," says one, "this stands pre-eminent, as rising to the highest point of joy and grandeur." Free from all local restrictions or national exclusiveness, it calls on *all the earth* to serve the Lord with gladness because we are all "His people and the sheep of His pasture," and because "the Lord is gracious, His mercy is ever-

lasting, and His truth endureth from generation to generation."

You see, my reverend brethren, through what large tracts of praise we have passed. So far we have been engaged on what alone can properly be called the worship of God. And now (our task completed), we have to go forth from the presence of the Divine Majesty, into the troubles, labours, and temptations of our ordinary life. Not without prayer then for God's peace and grace upon ourselves, and not without intercession for our Rulers in Church and State, and for all estates of men, can we bring our service to a close with that renewed note of gratitude in the General Thanksgiving, which recalls the central purpose of our priestly offering.

Midway, however, I must not fail to notice, between these two main divisions of the Service, there stands the recitation of the Apostles' Creed. The office of this symbol corresponds, I may observe, to its position. It sums up in the first place all we have heard of Divine truth in the lessons, correcting, it may be, whatever of partial opinion or erroneous inference our human infirmity may have been disposed to gather from what we have heard. And again, it prepares us for the prayers which are to follow by setting us consciously in the presence of Him whom we are to address. The Creed is the only part of the Service where we speak in the singular number, and it is plainly its office to bring each soul by itself into a conscious relation of belief and trust

towards God; that when all kneel together and mingle their supplications, no soul may lose the sense of its own needs and privileges in a mere vague sympathy with the rest. If I have not wholly failed in the aim of this exposition, I shall have shown you, my reverend brethren, how carefully, how almost scientifically, all the parts of this reasonable service are fitted together and made to contribute by their wonderful balance and adaptation to the attainment of their great priestly purpose. They are an offering and a sacrifice—a sacrifice of praise and adoration solemnly presented by the royal priesthood of believers in the sanctuary of God's realised Presence and Holiness.

But if they are nothing less than this, then how can any believer neglect such a service, or substitute mere learning in its place, without suffering grievous spiritual loss? Nay, how can he make such a substitution without logical inconsistency? Has he learned something more in the Bible class of the redeeming love of his Heavenly Father?—what then can be so necessary as that he should come and offer his thanksgiving for what he has learned, in the common sacrifice of the Church's adoration and praise? Knowledge is not a substitute but a reason for worship, and he who, with consciousness of what he is doing, absents himself from public worship, is wilfully forfeiting the loftiest privilege of the royal priesthood of believers. May God teach us all, my beloved brethren, so carefully to order our common

worship on the one hand, and so lovingly and believingly to use it on the other, as to attain for ourselves the deep peace of a conscious Divine communion, and to "show forth the excellences of Him who has called us out of darkness into His own marvellous light."

THE LORD'S SUPPER

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I HAVE finished my visitation of the nineteen parishes of this Rural Deanery (Lancaster), and it is with unfeigned thanks to God our Father that I can congratulate you on the good work which, on the whole, is being done both in Lancaster and the neighbouring villages. I need not say, perhaps, that here as elsewhere there is no uniformity in Church work and life. There are parishes in which the Church work is almost all that I could desire it to be; and there are others in which, through the age or illness of the clergyman, there is much to be desired and something to regret. I wish it was possible to increase so largely our Diocesan Superannuation Fund, that all who were conscious of failing powers and inability to do their work effectively might retire with a decent maintenance for their declining years. Wealthy men could do no better service to the Church than by making liberal donations to such a fund as I have named. Perhaps if the Church were prepared to grant reasonable pensions to her aged clergy, their resignation, under proper safe-

guards, might be made compulsory. This would prevent many scandals, and add enormously to the efficiency of our Church work and organization in some parishes.

I find that the number of communicants in this Rural Deanery is rather above the general average of the Diocese, higher than that in the towns, although rather lower than that in some of our country districts. I cannot but think, however, that it is still far from being satisfactory. Of course the number of communicants varies in our different parishes. In one of them the communicants are nearly a third of the whole population, while in another they number little more than one in forty. These extreme variations show clearly how much depends on the activity and influence of a parochial clergyman. That, however, the number of communicants in this Rural Deanery is considerably less than it should be, is clearly evinced by comparing the number of communicants with that of those confirmed. The number of communicants is a little over 3,000, while the confirmees amount to no fewer than 550. This latter number represents the yearly increment of communicants, for all I suppose who are confirmed partake of the Holy Communion at least once. If we suppose the average duration of the life of a confirmee to be from fifteen to forty, that should give us 13,660 communicants, or, making a large allowance for migration, at least 10,000. How is it then that our communicants number little more

than 3,000? Partly, I think, this result may be due to an inadequate conception of the importance of Holy Communion and of its true place and function in public worship.

We do not always remember, I fear, that the only Christian institutions which owe their foundation to our Divine Master are Baptism and Holy Communion. Teaching, indeed, and public worship already existed in the Jewish Synagogue; and for their continuance in the Christian Church we can plead both the teaching and example of our Lord. These, however, are not peculiarly Christian institutions. They are not necessarily connected with the work of our Saviour or with the contents of His preaching. With the two Sacraments, however, it is different. Our Lord not only instituted these, but also prescribed their very form and office. Jewish proselytes might indeed have been admitted into the Church of the old covenant by the ceremony of baptism, but they were not baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The eating of a meal in connection with the institution of sacrifice might be a common enough practice of the children of Abraham, but none of them ate and drank in remembrance of Christ, or received the sacred elements as a means of partaking of His body and blood. So essentially Christian indeed is this latter ordinance, so visibly stamped with the signature, so evidently filled with the grace of Christ that from the very beginning it has been looked

upon as an essential part of Christian worship. The heathen Pliny equally with the Christian Justin refers to the Eucharistic celebration as an essential part of Christian worship in the second century; and with respect to an even earlier period, we are led to the same conclusion when we observe the large space assigned to regulations about Holy Communion in the short ethical tract called the teaching of the Twelve Apostles. In those early days a Christian was always a communicant. Exclusion from the Lord's Table would have been to him the bitterest loss and disgrace which he could suffer. Voluntary withdrawal from it could never have entered his mind. It would have been more impossible than voluntary exile from his home and family. His Master's command constrained, his Master's promise encouraged him. How could he stay away with the tender words ringing in his ear, "Do this in remembrance of Me"? How could he be mad enough to despise the precious guerdon of life and strength held forth and made over to him in the solemn words of institution, "Take, eat, this is My body"; "Drink ye all of it, this is My blood"?

How comes it then, my brethren, that for so many baptized Christians in our day the Lord's Supper seems to have lost its central significance and paramount importance? There may be many reasons: the decay of faith, the horror of unreal pretensions, the fear of creating scandal, even the dread of incurring that eternal penalty which seems to be

denounced by an incorrect translation of St. Paul's words to the Corinthians. I dare say that many amongst us have felt the influence of some of these reasons; and yet I cannot help believing that they owe much of their force to an inadequate perception of the true place and importance of Holy Communion. Let me, then, shortly remind you what these really are.

First, then, Holy Communion was clearly intended as a means of Christian instruction. Whatever other meaning we may find in the words "Do this as My memorial," we cannot surely fail to find this in them. This ordinance was to be the memorial not only of Christ's death, but of that whole course of self-sacrifice which, beginning with the self-emptying of the Incarnation, culminated in the death on the Cross. So viewed, Holy Communion is a vivid presentation of the place of self-sacrifice in human redemption and in human life. It is the memorial of a self-sacrifice so complete and illimitable that it left in the Divine human nature making it, no single reserve of self-delight, no single withdrawal from shame, pain or suffering, which might interfere with God's will or man's salvation. As a spectacle, this memorial of Christ when seen by the eye of faith is infinitely enthralling and inspiring. It lifts the beholder into the loftiest region of Christian feeling and principle. It explains to him the law of service, showing him clearly that the highest reward of life is to be found not in wealth, power or reputation,

but in abundant opportunities of serving others. If Christ's heart is the deepest and Christ's life the greatest, which we know, this must be so, for the passion to save and serve was the strongest emotion of His heart, and the single regulating force of His life. Regarded then only as a memorial of what Christ was and did, and of what we ought to be and do, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the greatest teaching power in the Church. He who gazes on it with purged eyes, sees more of the secret of Christ in it than in the most eloquent of sermons. And he who fails to make and to study this memorial is wilfully blinding his eyes to the deepest lessons of the Gospel.

But now, secondly, the Lord's Supper is a necessary means of grace. If there be one truth more clearly taught than another in the Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament, it is this: that a Christian's life and fruitfulness depend entirely upon his union with Christ. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches," said our Divine Master; "as the branch cannot bring forth fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." The necessity of this vital union with Christ was taught by our Lord in another form to the multitudes in the wilderness. To arouse them from their carnal blindness, and to awaken in them desires for something better than the food of the body, He represented Himself to them as "the bread of life" which "God had given for the life of the world." And to

drive home more vividly to their drowsy minds the consciousness that the eating of the bread of God involved a real though mystical union with Himself, our Lord declares that this bread which they must eat is His own flesh. And yet again, when their earth-bound souls took these words literally and made them an occasion of stumbling, our Lord repeated them in a still stronger and more startling form. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of God and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Your union with Me, that is to say, must be so close and real, that the very Spirit which dwells in Me must pass into your souls and become their nourishment and inspiration. That Spirit, that life is so truly Mine, is so necessarily conditioned by dwelling in My humanity, that when you take it from Me, you take what is the very essence of My soul—you as it were "eat My flesh and drink My blood."

It was after listening to such teaching that they heard their Master say of the elements in the Holy Eucharist, "This is My body," "this is My blood." How could they mistake the meaning of such words? Already they had been warned that "the flesh profiteth nothing"; that the words which their Master spake to them "were Spirit and life." His flesh and Blood then meant Himself—meant the very essence of His humanity—that life which He had consecrated for them by suffering. How thoroughly St. Paul entered into the meaning of this teaching is apparent

from the whole scope of his writings. To be "in Christ" is with him to be a Christian. He conceives of the whole Christian Church as of a body of which Christ is the Head. Of himself he says: "I live and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Again of the cementing and constitution of this union he teaches that Holy Communion is so eminent and necessary a means, that he can speak of the bread as "the communion of Christ's body"; and of the cup as "the communion of Christ's blood." No one will suspect Baur of Tübingen of being a sacerdotalist, and yet when giving a summary of St. Paul's teaching he can use such language as this: "The fundamental and ever-recurring thought of the Apostle is, that only in union with Christ can the Christian be what he is and ought to be as a Christian. In the *"ὄντες ἐν Χριστῷ"* Christ is the immanent, substantial principle of their being and life; in them as a *σῶμα Χριστοῦ* He is Himself to be beheld in his identity with them; what is true of them is true of Him." But if unity with Christ be the essential condition of real and vital Christianity, it is not less true that in the view of St. Paul, Holy Communion is one of the necessary means of this union. "The more nearly," says Baur, "the Lord's Supper connects the members of the Christian fellowship with Christ, the more does it become itself the actual centre of that fellowship.

. . . thus the Lord's Supper as the central point of the Christian religion cannot be dissociated from this historical commemoration, and he who fails to

hold the feast in living consciousness of what it means, must therefore be removed more or less from the centre of the Christian religion. It is only in the living reference to Christ and to His atoning death, as brought home to the consciousness in the Lord's Supper, that the Christian community becomes a *σῶμα Χριστοῦ*." The last idea set forth in this summary of Baur is further developed in the teachings of the Epistle to the Hebrews. From this we learn that not the *death* of the victim but its *blood*—that "blood" which was the "life," typified the cleansing of the worshipper from the guilt and stain of sin. What was represented by the offering was thus nothing but this—that only by the power of a new and perfect life could sin be removed, and God and man be reconciled. To those who were familiar with such teaching, how could there be any doubt of the true meaning of our Lord's deep words, "Drink ye all of it, for this is My Blood of the covenant which is shed for many unto the remission of sins"? These words meant and *must* have meant to them—this wine represents that life which I have perfected and offered to God for you, and its drinking in faith is to be the means whereby you all partake of it.

Now, my reverend brethren, can we or any of our people either escape the consciousness of guilt, or live a Christian life, without entering by faith into the communion of that life which is offered to us in the Holy Eucharist? There are men, I know,

amongst us who teach that our nature contains within itself the power of self-renovation and self-regulation. Teach a man only what he ought to be, set before his eyes only a noble and stimulating example, and he will naturally determine, and as naturally carry out his determination, to imitate that example and achieve that ideal. So they teach ; but does our own experience, or our knowledge of human life, justify in any way such teaching? Do we not know, on the contrary, that human lives are never found sufficient to themselves ; that the experience is absolutely universal "that when we would do good, evil is present with us"? It is the ignoring of this fact that human nature is weak, and needs spiritual aid and reinforcement, which is the secret of so many philanthropic failures. The teetotaler so often fails to make drunkards sober because he thinks it is enough to make a determination and to sign a pledge. The socialist so often fails to make men prosperous and happy because he thinks that industry and self-denial are dispositions which are natural to the human heart. All these forget that men are naturally weak and prone to evil, and that nothing can give them spiritual strength and holiness but the power of Christ's eternal life.

But now, my reverend brethren, if it is this, and nothing less than this (the *conditio sine qua non* of all real personal reformation and successful spiritual service), which is offered to us in Holy Communion,

can we not see how terrible a spiritual loss those of our brethren are suffering who habitually neglect this means of grace? and are we not ourselves much to blame that we are so ready to acquiesce in such neglect without raising the voice of urgent and perpetual warning? Where is the clergyman who says as plainly and as constantly as he ought to say, neglect of Holy Communion is in a Christian a sin, and a sin moreover which, leaving him without the aid of Christ's proffered life, is the sure precursor of many other sins? Where is the clergyman who urges as earnestly and frequently as he should, we are weak and inconsistent and fleshly and unhappy, because we habitually neglect to seek that communion of Christ's life which is offered to us in the Holy Eucharist? If we had more of such teaching as this amongst us, we should not have to bewail, as now we too often must, the inconsistency of Christian lives and the contempt of Christian ordinances.

Once more, let me remind you that Holy Communion was designed to be the means at once of representing and of quickening the spirit of Christian brotherhood. If in the Holy Eucharist we all partake of the one common life of Christ, then are we in the truest and most literal sense the members of a single family. "Since it is one loaf," says Baur, "the many are one body, for they all partake of the one bread." This truly Pauline idea was caught up and expressed in the teaching of the Twelve Apostles

as early as about the year A.D. 100. "As this broken bread," we read, "was once scattered in grains upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom." We often complain of the icy reserve, of the personal insularity which separates our members from each other, and forbids that brotherly sympathy and geniality which of old was at once the sign and the delight of Christian life. Is not the cause too often to be found in the neglect or misuse of Holy Communion? Let us strive, my reverend brethren, not only by our loving administration of the Holy Eucharist, but also by our searching and genial preparation for it, to arouse and encourage among Christian people the feeling that they are all brethren in Christ Jesus. Would it not be an important means to this end if we could establish in all our parishes a communicants' union, in which it should be the aim of the elder communicants to sustain and encourage the younger by sympathy and brotherly counsel? It has come to my knowledge, for instance, that young communicants who were too shy and self-distrustful to come to the Lord's Table alone, have been preserved from declension by the sisterly encouragement of a Christian lady, who, waiting for them at the door of the church, has accompanied them to the Holy Feast. This is but a specimen of the many forms in which a loving and thoughtful brotherly kindness can make a reality of Christian com-

munion. Would it not again contribute powerfully to break down our well-nigh invincible English shyness and exclusiveness, if, in some form best suited to our modern life, we revived the primitive *Agapé*, or feast of love. We might begin, perhaps, by an annual or half-yearly communicants' festival to which all should be invited who had ever been communicants in the parish church, and in which the common meal might be brightened not only by Christian converse, but also by Christian instruction and sacred song. Nothing more surely breaks down the barriers of a cold reserve than the partaking of a common meal and the brotherly familiarity which it encourages. Coldness, want of brotherly sympathy, is at once the weakness and the reproach of our Church, and I believe, my reverend brethren, that in no way can we more effectively relieve ourselves of these, than by restoring the celebration of Holy Communion to its true significance, and its place of paramount importance, while at the same time giving to the preparation for it that thoughtful and brotherly attention which its vast importance demands.

EARLY COMMUNIONS

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

By the blessing of God I have been enabled to finish the visitation of the last of the 117 parishes which constitute the districts of Manchester and Salford. As might have been expected, I have found in this great and populous area considerable diversity both in social and religious conditions. I have found both wealth and poverty, both culture and ignorance, both religious feeling and the absence of it, both diligence and carelessness on the part of the clergy, both zeal and apathy on the part of the laity. On the whole, however, I am happy to report that the condition of both churches and schools is better not only than my expectation, but than the report which the clergy had made of their own work in the *Church Year Book*.

In Salford, as elsewhere, I have found that our Church suffers the most serious losses amongst those who have been recently confirmed. The children continue with us through their school life, they learn to know and love us as sympathetic friends and religious instructors. They pass from the elder

classes of our day and Sunday schools to the Confirmation class. There, as never before, and perhaps as never again, they become the recipients of a religious teaching as tender and impressive as it is systematic and searching. In all the glow and freshness of believing youth they pass from this course of happy preparation to the Table of the Lord. In their first, and, it may be, in some subsequent Communion, they give promise of a life of happy piety and loving service. And then insensibly, but too surely, many of them grow slack in their Communion, become irregular even in their attendance at public worship, and finally are swept out of our sight into the whirlpool of frivolous gaiety which ingulfs so many lives in our great cities. These losses would be heart-breaking if habit had not dulled our perception of their meaning and extent.

But, my reverend brethren, ought we to witness this deterioration of bright young characters, this fatal drawing away of the very life blood of the Church, without deep searchings of heart as to our own diligence and fidelity? We are all aware of this terrible leakage, and I dare say that we have all made efforts of some kind to stop it. Ought we, however, to be satisfied with the plea, I have done my best and failed? In a matter of such vital importance failure in one direction should only stimulate us to renewed efforts in the same or in other directions. When we think how vastly the membership of our Church would be increased in number and improved

in quality by the retention of our young communicants, we ought to resolve that, God helping us, we will never cease to struggle with the world for the possession of these fresh young souls, until by one means or another we have secured them for the service of our Master. No disaster is so great as the loss of them. No victory would be so great as their retention or recovery. How then shall we achieve this great victory? by what means can we avert this disastrous and disgraceful defeat?

Some are ready to assure us that we may attain no slight measure of success by reverting to the primitive practice of early and fasting Communions. Young souls say they are attracted by sacrifice. Only demand from them a degree of self-denial which shall give them assurance of the reality of their religion, and this of itself will furnish the best defence against the allurements of the flesh and the world. So long as early Communions are urged only on the grounds of spiritual expediency I have nothing to say against them. For myself I prefer the early hour. I can then approach the Table of my Lord with fullest and freshest powers of soul, and with least distraction of feeling. Believing again as I do, that in this central ordinance of our holy religion the Lord Jesus gives Himself really because spiritually, to the faith of the waiting disciple, I recognize in an early Communion the very best means for kindling zeal, confirming faith, and stimulating effort, on the Lord's Day. Fully

sympathizing however as I do with the practice of early Communion, I cannot withhold the expression of my regret that this subject should have been recently made the occasion of such hot and bitter dispute between good men. If there be one thing certain to me on the matter, it is this—that the time of Holy Communion is no question of principle. When extreme men say that to join in an evening Communion is to commit a mortal sin, I am content to answer with St. Chrysostom, “If any one call it sin, then let him degrade Christ Himself.”

Very recently the Bishops of Salisbury and Southwell (and especially the former) have dealt carefully and learnedly with this question, and the result of their inquiry is, shortly, this: that the separation of the Agapé from the Eucharist, and the transference of the latter from a night service to one just before daybreak, took place about the time of the persecution of Trajan, of which Pliny's letter in the year 112 A.D. forms one chapter. The Bishop of Salisbury's main reason for this conclusion, a conclusion somewhat more definite than that of some others, is given by him thus: “In the state of things pre-supposed in the Epistle of St. Ignatius to the Smyrnæans, the Eucharist and the Agapé still seemed to be united, while in the careful description given by Justin Martyr (*circa*, 140 A.D.) they appear to be quite separate.” The reasons for this change are easily conceived. It was expedient to disarm the well-known Roman jealousy of all

kinds of guilds and voluntary societies, to refute heathen calumnies, and "to avoid such real disorders as St. Paul noted and reprov'd at Corinth." Many Christians besides were slaves, who would of course have to work on Sundays as on other days, and who could therefore only attend a religious service in the early morning. The Church, in a word, changed the time of celebrating Holy Communion in the second century for good and sufficient reason; and, therefore, as St. Augustine told Januarius, who wanted to correct the Church practice of his time by a reference to that of the Apostles, "there is no better rule for the wise and serious Christian in this matter than to conform to the practice which he finds prevailing in the Church to which it may be his lot to come." He enforces this wise counsel by a very interesting account of a certain religious difficulty of his mother when first she accompanied him to Milan. She was troubled on finding that the Church in that city did not fast, as she had been accustomed to do on Saturday. Her great son, who was not then a Christian believer, consulted St. Ambrose on the matter, and gained from him the following excellent and large-hearted reply: "When I visit Rome I fast on Saturday; when I am here I do not fast. On the same principle do you observe the custom prevailing in whatever church you come to, if you desire neither to give offence by your conduct nor to find cause of offence in another." *Ex pede, Herculem.* We know the

Church's great men at once, by one of their large-hearted sentences. It was a little soul like that of Januarius', which wanted to correct the Church's practice in a thing indifferent by reference to that of the Apostolic age; they were great souls like those of Ambrose and Augustine which kept the due sense of doctrinal proportion.

But now, if on the authority of these great Fathers we hold that the time of celebration, and the accident of fasting participation are things indifferent, then let us not too hastily blame those of our brethren who have concluded that the circumstances of our own days have made it advisable for them to revert to Apostolic practice, as the circumstances of the second century made it advisable for the Church of that epoch to depart from Apostolic practice. My own experience may serve as an illustration. When I went to Paddington I found an evening Communion established in the parish church. I added four early Communions and one midday Communion every month, and then I thought that I might discontinue the evening Communion. Before doing so, however, I deemed it necessary to inquire what had led to its establishment. I found that many of the poor people in my parish were grooms and coachmen, who were compelled by their employers to drive them to theatres, operas, or parties on Saturdays, and that, returning at or after midnight, they could not get to rest in some cases much before two o'clock in the morning. It would clearly be useless and even un-

reasonable to ask those persons to get up to an early Communion. More particular inquiry further convinced me that among the richer members of my flock there were some aged people who, for physical reasons, could neither rise early in the morning nor remain to a celebration of Holy Communion after our long morning service. What then was I to do? Was I practically to excommunicate these people in order to return to a sub-Apostolic which differed from the Apostolic practice, because I found that it best suited myself? I did not feel at liberty to do so. The time of the celebration of Holy Communion seemed and seems to me to be among the things indifferent, to be among the things, in other words, which fairly admit of variation, if the spiritual edification of God's people requires it.

I counsel you then, my brethren, while not lightly departing from the custom of the Church Catholic, to abide by such regulations on this matter as may most conduce to the spiritual welfare of believers.

But to return for a moment to the more special subject of this address, let me beg you in your parochial arrangements to have particular regard to the retention of our younger communicants. I will venture to make to you in connection with this subject three practical suggestions.

Establish in your parish, if as yet you have failed to do so, classes for the study of God's Word; and if you cannot teach them yourself, seek, to conduct them, some experienced Christian who is distin-

guished not only for piety and high character, but also for culture, intelligence, and sympathetic interest in the young. The success of such a class will depend entirely on the teacher. Bible classes may have failed in your parish again and again, but if so, that was because the teacher was not equal to his task. Do not despair because of failure. Failure should always lead us to seek for its cause, that discovering, we may take steps to remove it. If you cannot find a suitable teacher among your own people, appeal, as you have the right to do, to the brotherly sympathy of some neighbouring clergyman who has a larger number of intelligent and earnest believers among his flock. If he has the heart of a true pastor he will not grudge you one of his best to supply so great and sore a need.

Secondly, establish, if you have not yet done so, three or four services a year for all those who have at any time been confirmed in your church. Dean Champneys established such services at St. Jude's, Whitechapel, and he told me they constituted a bond of brotherly union so strong, that it held together in loving sympathy and mutual support young Christians who had been scattered by the accidents of life into all parts of London. The anticipation of such services made people desire to look into their brethren's faces without shame, and the memory of them, the power of Divine grace carried away from them, served as a shield and a support in the hour of temptation and danger.

Above all, establish I entreat you, in your parishes communicants' unions, and let it be the main object of such unions to bring the young communicants into brotherly relations with those who by age and experience can give them sympathy, counsel, and support. The success of such unions will of course depend largely on the loving care and attention of the clergy. But a right method of proceeding can do much. There should be in the first place special instruction on the nature, place and benefits of Holy Communion, together with a careful exposition of the deeper teaching contained in the Gospel according to St. John, and in such Epistles as those of St. Paul to the Ephesians and Colossians. It might next be well to hold occasional conferences on the deeper aspects, needs and secrets of the spiritual life, like those held on the broader questions of theology by such men as Lacordaire and Père Hyacinthe. In the third place the devotions of the union might be deepened and spiritualised by the use of prayers gathered from the works of such great masters of English devotion as Bishop Andrews, Bishop Wilson, and Jeremy Taylor. And lastly, the sense of brotherhood might be quickened and enlivened by holy festivals, which should repeat in forms more suited to the circumstances of our modern life the primitive festivity of the Agapé. By such methods, wisely and lovingly applied, I am persuaded that our young communicants would find at the most critical period of their lives that defence against the seductions of

the world, and that support of the immaturity of their faith, which is so much needed and so seldom, I fear, supplied.

Once again, my reverend brethren, let me remind you of the immense importance of the effort which I am commending to you, and may God give you such holy wisdom, such long-suffering patience, and such deep anxiety for the salvation of the young, that through good report and ill, through whatever temporary checks and partial failures you may encounter, you may be enabled to prove in this vital matter, as in other spheres of your labour, that faith is indeed the victory that overcometh the world.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

MY visitation of the parishes in the Rural Deanery of Burnley has disclosed the urgent need of a speedy division in Habergham Eaves, Colne, Nelson, Padiham, and several of the parishes of Burnley. The population in this division of Lancashire is growing very rapidly, and although in several cases excellent work is being done at Mission Rooms by diligent curates, yet the need is becoming more urgent every day for the multiplication of independent cures. Having regard to the difficulties inevitably created by a rapidly increasing population, much excellent work is being done throughout the Rural Deanery; although, as I have had occasion to observe in former cases, the record of that work in the *Church Year Book* is exceedingly defective.

You are perhaps weakest here in the supply of district visitors. These are wholly wanting not only in many country districts, where they are less needed, but also in some of your most populous parishes. I am at a loss to know how the work can be adequately

done without lay help of this kind in parishes with a population of sixteen or seventeen thousand. In such cases it must be exceedingly difficult for a clergyman to know when his visits are most needed, while at the same time the absence of pastoral sympathy and support must be keenly felt by many as well of the sick as of the whole. I can understand that where population has been increasing rapidly, this absence of district visitors may be a survival from the time when lay ministration was less needed, but not the less does it constitute a great practical defect, while offering to the faithful laity an urgent appeal for instant and effective assistance. It is just in growing and energetic populations like those of many parts of this Rural Deanery that the difficulties arising from increase of knowledge, and especially of the knowledge of Holy Scripture, are most likely to do harm. Nothing is harder, particularly to the young, than to co-ordinate increasing knowledge with traditional truth. The young man cannot be expected to discriminate in what he has been taught, between its essential and accidental elements: between those parts of it which are true for all men and all times, and those other parts which are only for a race and an age. He will take the whole or he will leave the whole. How can he be expected to test his teachers, to undergo the pain of suspense, the labour of investigation? If his teachers are unreliable in anything, they are unreliable in everything. If a system

of doctrine be untrue in part, for him it is untrue altogether. And thus, in an age of transition, like ours, when the rapid increase of all kinds of knowledge has thrown discredit on many of the non-essential elements of traditional teaching, he, like so many of the men in France and Italy, is ready to put aside religious truth as useless and unattainable, or even to abandon wholly the faith of his childhood.

I have reason to believe that such a state of feeling prevails widely amongst the more intelligent of our young men, and thus I desire to say to you a few words this morning about the true character of the Revelation contained in the Old Testament. You will find, I believe, that that Revelation is peculiar both in its object and in its method. With respect to its object those were wise words which were spoken twenty-seven years ago by Bishop Thirlwall to Mr. Lyttleton: "I prefer the description given of the Bible in a later page of your work, that it is a record of the Divine education of mankind. But I think even this description needs a further limitation, and that the education of which the Bible is a record is only the moral and religious education." Speaking in the light of the present day I should be disposed to add this further limitation, that the Bible is only a moral as far as it is a religious educator, deriving its whole power of moral instruction from its revelation of God's nature, and his relation to man.

But now in the next place, it is important to observe that the Bible is peculiar, not only in its scope

but also in its method of instruction. It teaches religious truth by the method of development—not at once in its abstract perfection, but step by step, as men were able to bear and to receive it.

Of course if this is true, if the Bible has been given to us as a record of the gradual revelation to man of God's true nature and His relation to our race, it will follow that in its earlier pages it will not only reflect the scientific and historical knowledge of the ages to which it refers, but that it will exhibit imperfection even in regard to its moral and religious conceptions. I know that many are very slow to admit as much as this. They think that it makes the Bible less trustworthy as a religious guide: in fact that it robs it of well-nigh all religious use and authority. But, my reverend brethren, we are not now speaking of consequences, but of facts. Is the Bible the record of a progressive revelation of God? Because if it be, whether we like it or not, it is certain that the earlier stages of that progress were more imperfect than its later stages. We can only avoid this conclusion by denying that the moral and religious teaching of the Bible is progressive—that is, by denying what is as obvious as the sun in the heavens.

Does any one think that I speak too confidently? Then let me borrow an illustration from Professor Mozley's admirable treatise on *The Ruling Ideas in Early Ages and their Relation to Old Testament Faith*. You know that "in the ancient mind all the

world over, one very remarkable want is apparent, viz., a true idea of the individuality of man, an adequate conception of him as a substantial being in himself, whose existence was his own." In the laws of Manu, among the Aryan Indians, it is expressly declared that "a man is perfect, when he consists of himself, his wife, and his son." The man did not stand complete when he stood only in his separate will—in his individual body and soul. You did not get the whole of him until you got also those who shared and perpetuated his life. It seemed as hard in those early times to conceive a man complete without the other members of his family, as it is for us to conceive a limb complete without connection with the body of which it is a part. This intellectual disability was not confined to any particular race or region. It affected the Roman equally with the Indian. "In the Roman State," to quote Professor Mozley, "the son was the property of the father, without rights, without substantial being, in the eye of the Roman law. The father had the power of life and death over him, and was the proprietor of all the wealth he acquired. The wife, again, was the property of her husband, an ownership of which the moral result was most disastrous." Shrinking from such a bondage Roman women refused to enter either into the sacramental or civil marriage, and substituted for it a contract which left divorce a mere matter of caprice. It was the same defective view of human individuality which both in

Greece and Rome reduced the servant to the slave, and the slave to the mere instrument of cupidity and lust, the pestilent source of a moral corruption which, increasing as time went on, rotted away the very pillars of those proud, classic civilizations, and strewed the earth with their ghastly and hopeless wrecks.

The Israelites shared with their neighbours this fatal mistake as to the true value of the individual man; and so we find amongst them as we should expect, actions and institutions which correspond to this imperfect moral idea. When Achan had sinned, it was not enough to punish him—his wife and children must share in the penalty of his offence. Do you ask why such an injustice was permitted, under the guidance of a Divine Lawgiver? I answer, because in that age and amongst those people God would have appeared unjust if Achan's family had been suffered to escape. In the popular conception they formed an essential part of Achan. Until they had been punished, Achan would not have suffered the due penalty of his offence. Had they been suffered to escape God would have appeared less than just. His mercy would have been mistaken for weakness. That rough, fierce, and morally purblind generation would have come to distrust and despise Him. Here then came in the principle so clearly stated by our Lord in connection with divorce—"for the hardness of the people's hearts"—they were suffered to do these things. An imperfect law had a better moral effect on such

people, more quickly and more effectually improved their ethical condition, than a perfect law could have done. This is a truth against which human pride is always ready to rebel. The ignorant man thinks and believes that human beings were always good and self-sufficient. It humiliates him to be told that men can only learn slowly and gradually, with many a mistake, many a fall, many a long dismal interval of reaction. And yet nothing is more certain. When with much effort men have risen to the perception of a truth which is a little way beyond them, they become weary and impatient of labour. They must rest, and even, at times, go back again, before they are ready for another small advance. The obstacle to their progress is not merely an intellectual but also a moral one. Dr. Carpenter has very lucidly shown in his *Mental Physiology*, that the most powerful factor in the attainment of truth is the power of concentrating attention upon a special subject. And this power in turn depends upon that of the will. In an age then of wild and unregulated impulse, when at every turn the will is overpowered by instinct and circumstance, men have so little power of fixing their attention that their mental progress must be necessarily slow. When God becomes our Teacher He cannot reverse these mental and moral conditions of progress which He Himself appointed, without doing violence to our nature, without fatally interfering with that moral freedom, in which we discern especially His

own image within us. If that image is to be developed, if its features are to be brought out, and brightened, and cleared from the obscuring clouds of selfish passion, this must be done by patient persuasion and not by sudden and overmastering force.

But surely, it may be urged, you admit the possibility of miracle—of the miracle, for instance, of Christ's resurrection; and if miracle be possible at all, why may it not be here, in the region of Divine instruction? This objection springs from nothing better than a confusion of ideas. As applied to things without will the laws of nature are mere rules of succession, and for good reason those rules may be varied, without doing violence to the nature of the things which have been made subject to them. Things without will can offer no resistance to God's purpose. But by the Divine ordinance itself man has his rights, even over against his Maker. God cannot do violence to our will, and the laws of our mental constitution, without contradicting Himself. And hence it follows that our Divine education must be progressive, having respect in every one of its stages to the will and capacity of its subjects.

Well, but if this be so, how, I may be asked, are we to know that there has been any Divine education at all? How are we to be sure that we have had any higher teacher than our own capacity and the pressure of accidental circumstances?

Whenever, I answer, it is alleged that there has been a progressive education, you must judge of the

truth of this allegation by looking to the end. As a matter of fact, has there been progress to an end? If so, then the end shows the intention, is the best possible evidence of the intention. Let me illustrate my meaning in the case of that imperfect apprehension of individual rights to which I have already referred. How did the Jews learn the true value of the individual? By learning gradually, I answer, the true nature of that God to whom he was related. Jephthah appears in the Epistle to the Hebrews on the golden roll of sacred heroes. He might be little enough of a prophet, but a hero he was, and as such no bad representative of the current religious ideas of his time. But can you conceive anything much ruder than his conception of his own relation to Jahveh? One might almost be reading from the Moabite stone of Mesha, as one listens to Jephthah's address to the king of Ammon: "Wilt not thou possess what Chemosh thy God giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever Jahveh our God hath dispossessed before us, them will we possess." Such a comparison between Jahveh and Chemosh, so rude a test of Divine favour as victory in war, demanding, as it were, that a God should fight for his worshippers, would have been impossible in a later age. Now recall to your mind the various stages through which the Israelitish ideal of God was elevated by prophetic men, through the conceptions that Jahveh was more powerful than all gods, that He was more righteous than all gods; that He was so all-holy, all-wise,

and all-righteous—that only He could be God at all—to the time when Amos could perceive the God of Israel to be so essentially just and holy, that He must needs punish His own people, being unrighteous, and you will see in the end to which this progressive teaching led, the presiding purpose of the whole course of it. And then again you will understand how it came about that it was impossible to think of one who lived daily in spiritual communion with such a God, that he was nothing more than a part of some other human whole, or the property of some merely human master. The idea of Amos necessitated that of Ezekiel, “the soul that sinneth it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.”

It is a careful study like this which will convince us of the truth of St. Paul’s statement, that “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.” The way was long through which the pedagogue had to conduct us, and, by the way, he taught us such lessons as we could bear. But ever as his scholar rose to the perception of some loftier truth, the older and more childish conceptions fell away, till at length, with higher thoughts and strengthened faculty, the pupil passed into that school of Christ where he learnt that God was his father and all men his brethren; where the only sacrifice was that of a chastened will, and the only law, that of eternal love.

Certainly, to a superficial reader, nothing can

appear more chaotic than the sacred literature of the Hebrews. It comprises tradition, history, philosophy, poetry, gnomic wisdom, law, and prophecy, and these in all stages of development. Of any single dominating purpose and plan there seems, at first sight, little indication. But a deeper study of these extremely diversified documents reveals beneath all their variety a commanding unity of design:—the continually brightening purpose to elevate the moral character of man by revealing to him, through the laws, institutions, and history of a chosen people, the true nature of God and His relation to His human creatures. Let us only remember that the Divine education of Israel was gradual, proceeding step by step, as the pupil was able to bear it, and then, as we pass down the ages, we shall see accumulating evidence of a Divine mind dwelling in the midst of this great historical development, urging, suggesting, restraining, controlling, and so shaping and co-ordinating a thousand warring influences, that in the end they are constrained to accomplish its own beneficent purpose.

If in any degree I have enabled you to get a clearer idea of the meaning and necessity of revelation by development, I feel sure I shall have prepared you to welcome with gratitude whatever a true criticism can tell us of the composition and temporal succession of the varied contents of the Old Testament. The more exactly we know the age and character of the documents we are studying, the more precisely shall we be able to recognize the different stages through

which the Divine Teacher has been leading us to the truth. If, for instance, the Pentateuch, instead of being the work of one hand and of one age, contains the contribution of several hands in different ages, then by placing those contributions in their true temporal succession we shall discern more clearly, not only the several stages of the pupil's progress, but also the surer signs of the Divine Teacher's purpose.

With a true idea of the method of Divine Revelation in the Old Testament, nothing but profit can come to us from a careful and reverent criticism of its contents. In his exposition of the First Book of Kings, issued during the present year, Archdeacon Farrar has not hesitated to affirm—"There is scarcely a single competent scholar who does not now admit that the Hexateuch is a composite structure; that much of the Levitical legislation which was once called Mosaic, is in reality an aftergrowth, which in its present form is not earlier than the days of the Prophet Ezekiel; that the book of Deuteronomy belongs in its present form (whatever older elements it may contain) to the era of Hezekiah's or Josiah's reformation; that the books of Zechariah and Isaiah are not homogeneous, but preserve the writings of more prophets than their titles imply; that only a small section of the Psalter was the work of David; that the book of Ecclesiastes was not the work of King Solomon; that most of the book of Daniel belongs to the era of Antiochus Epiphanes, and so forth." And then, having made this assertion, he

asks the pertinent question, "In what respect is the Bible less precious, less 'inspired' in the only tenable sense of that very undefined word, in consequence of such discoveries?"

But I would go further. I not only affirm that such conclusions do no harm, and interfere with no article of the Christian faith; but also that in thoughtful minds they have already done much, and in all minds they will yet do more, to clear away those doubts and difficulties which have driven so many into an unwilling and unwelcome Agnosticism. The objections of the infidelity which is most popular among the working classes are chiefly those of the school of Thomas Paine. And how completely are those objections answered and dissipated by the conclusions of a reverent criticism! Indiscriminating punishments, exterminating wars, the *lex talionis*, the moral lapses of pious men, imperfect ethical teaching, and the like, can be shown to be the necessary consequences of the hardness of men's hearts—the unavoidable incidents of a Divine education, designed for men in moral and spiritual childhood. And if again we are reminded that there are apparent or real contradictions between different accounts of the same event, we answer that it is just in such contradictions that critics discern the best evidence of good faith. Such books as those of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, are avowedly compilations from earlier authorities. Had the compiler been anxious chiefly

about his own credit, nothing would have been easier than the removal of such obvious inconsistencies. That the sacred writers have suffered them to remain is the best proof of their own honest endeavour to preserve the testimony of their authorities. Such objections as are now popularly paraded are, in truth, objections, not to the inspiration of Holy Scripture, but to the exploded theory of verbal dictation. As such they once had their use and justification. To-day they are as effete and belated as the theory they are meant to discredit.

Only hold fast the simple truth, my reverend brethren, that the inspiration of the Bible is shown in the gradual revelation of God's nature and His relation to man ; and then, not only will all these fiery darts of unbelief drop harmless from the shield of your faith, but you will find in the loving study of Holy Scripture lessons of God's patience and long-suffering kindness, which shall prepare you for those of the manger and the Cross.

THE LORD'S DAY

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I HAVE finished my visitation of the twenty-four parishes of the Rural Deanery of Ashton. The population of this district belongs mainly to the working classes, and yet I have found everywhere, I am glad to say, a rather high level of religious and social prosperity. There are indeed in certain parts of Ashton those usual slums which seem inseparable from the gathering together of large masses of people into a narrow space. Even these, however, exhibit fewer signs of poverty and neglect than some of the corresponding districts in the lower parts of Manchester and Salford. The children in the schools are generally clean, tidily dressed, healthy-looking and intelligent, a sure sign of a high degree of social order and prosperity. In the villages of the hill country I had expected to find signs of deficient knowledge and slow intelligence, but I was agreeably disappointed, the children of these districts being in no wise inferior to those of Ashton and Staley Bridge.

In some of the parishes of this Rural Deanery the

provision of the means of grace would be greatly improved by the acquisition of Mission Rooms. In hamlets which are distant from the church, the aged and infirm cannot, and the careless and indifferent will not, attend at the parochial centre. If a Mission Room were established in their midst, where Sunday services were conducted with the help of the laity, I believe that many would be rescued from the enforced or culpable neglect of public worship. The excuse of poor clothing, or inconvenient distance, would at any rate be taken away, and the Mission Room might easily be made the scene not only of Sunday worship, but also of week-day study and recreation. Many things can be done for the moral and religious good of the people with the aid of a Mission Room, which cannot even be attempted without it.

In a considerable number of your parishes much yet remains to be done for the aid of young communicants. I recently called public attention to the great importance of this matter, pointing out that we suffer no loss so serious as that of the recently-confirmed, and that no improvement of our organization would be so valuable, as one which should bind together in a brotherly unity our younger and elder communicants. The clergyman will of course do what he can, but he cannot do everything. Nor should he be expected to do everything. He is not the Church, but only its minister. The Church consists of baptized believers, and in a very special

sense, of those who habitually obey their Lord's command to make a continual memento of Him at His Table. It is for believers, then, and especially for those who are established in the Word and life of Christ, to take up this duty and do it. Let the older take the younger believer kindly by the hand, speaking to him loving words of cheer and sympathy, watching over him with brotherly solicitude when he is tempted, and urging him to steadfastness with brotherly importunity when he staggers or grows slack and indifferent in joining the assembly of God's people. A communicants' union would furnish the occasion and opportunity for such offices of Christian love, and might even supply in a sober and devotional way that craving for occasional festivity which expressed itself in the ancient Agapé.

Our duties to our brethren in the Lord come first, but we must not become so engrossed in them as to forget our obligations to those who are without. And I think I discern some danger of this latter kind in this Rural Deanery. It is, I cannot help feeling, a rather melancholy fact that out of twenty-four parishes there are only three of which the clergymen record that they have any district visitors. The fact, I am glad to know, is rather better than the record, as there are one or two parishes where the clergy have omitted to enter the work of existing district visitors upon the returns, and several others in which there are persons who, not having

taken the office, are still doing no little of the work of district visiting. When all is said, however, the deficiency of district visitors is conspicuous and deplorable. It may be true of many parishes that the people are nearly all on the same social level; but still I do not see that this fact should make district visiting impossible or even distasteful. A Christian man may be fitted to be a district visitor, either by his special culture, or his special goodness. Of these two qualifications I believe the latter is the more important. I had myself a large poor parish in London where my district visitors were nearly all of the working classes, and yet I never knew a body of men who were either more welcome or more efficient in the discharge of this difficult duty. If a man be conspicuous for holiness of life and consistency of character, he will be none the less welcome as a Christian counsellor and comforter, because, like his Divine Master, he is of humble social condition. Some of your parishioners may have to work hard and long, but I have always found that when any work is to be done, it is the busy man who does it best and most readily. And if you want a still further inducement to urge this duty upon the faithful, think, I pray you, my reverend brethren, how much more efficiently you might do your own pastoral work if you were kept informed by a faithful band of visitors of the ever-varying needs of the parish, where there was a stricken family, or an individual who was sick or sorry, afflicted in mind,

body, or estate. I cannot doubt that the absence of district visitors is a great loss and enfeeblement; and that it will be your wisdom not less than your duty to urge those of your parishioners to undertake this work who have the necessary bodily and spiritual qualifications for it.

I turn now to another matter which is of considerable practical importance in our country districts—the proper observance of the Lord's Day. On this subject an able and elaborate report has recently been presented to the Convocation of Canterbury by its Committee on "The Sunday Opening of Museums." The report takes a very wide range, and embraces not only the whole question of the opening of public libraries, parks, and museums, but also much of the history of Sabbatical observance during the present century. It is satisfactory to observe that with all our shortcomings we have advanced very far since the opening years of this century in the direction of a reverent and profitable employment of the Sunday. It seems to be generally agreed that the opening on the Sunday afternoons or evenings of public parks, museums, and libraries, has conferred obvious benefits upon certain classes of our population without materially interfering with religious teaching and worship. If this be so, then no reasonable defender of Sabbatical institutions can object to this modern movement. At my last visitation I endeavoured to set before you what seemed to me the present position of the

Sabbath question, and the valid grounds of Sabbatical observance. I felt justified in putting the matter thus :

(1.) The Sabbath was known to the Accadians, as a period of abstinence from certain labours, and as "a rest of the heart."

(2.) It gained a new sanction, and a more definitely spiritual determination, when it was included in the Decalogue.

(3.) The fourth commandment embodied and expressed, no less than the other precepts of the Decalogue, a moral principle :—the principle, viz., that in our present state of spiritual imperfection it is necessary for us to set apart regularly recurring portions of our time in order to recruit our bodily and spiritual energy, and to afford opportunities for communion with heaven. The fourth commandment has thus authority for the Christian, not because it was promulgated at Sinai, but because it expresses a moral principle which is of universal human obligation.

(4.) We are thus able to understand the change of day in the Christian Church from the seventh day of the week to the first. On the first day of the week we commemorate a greater deliverance than that of Israel from Egypt : even the deliverance of humanity from sin and death by the Resurrection of our Divine Redeemer. At first the Church kept both the Sabbath and the Lord's Day as holy seasons of rest and worship. The Apostolical Constitutions,

which though compiled as late, perhaps, as the fourth century, still report to us the rules of the Church in the anti-Nicene age; positively direct that "slaves shall work for five days, but on the Sabbath Day and the Lord's Day shall have leisure to go to Church for instruction in piety." This was the Church's beneficent rule; but it was a rule on which she found it impossible long to insist. Many Christians were slaves, and pagan or worldly masters soon compelled them to choose between the two days of sacred observance. When once compelled to choose, their choice could not for a moment be doubtful. They chose the day on which the greatest spiritual fact in the world's history was commemorated; and thus the Lord's Day became the Christian Sabbath. I do not think that it is inappropriately so called; for while the special day of the week reminds us of the greatest fact of Christian history, the periodic recurrence of that day expresses the moral principle contained in the old law of the Sabbath.

If this general statement of the matter be substantially accepted, we shall be justified in coming to the following important practical conclusions:—

(1.) On the Lord's Day we rest from our labours that we may draw near to God in ordinances of Divine teaching and worship.

(2.) The particular methods by which this law was applied to practical life, in the Levitical precepts, are no more binding on us as Christians, than are the like methods by which in the Levitical ordi-

nances, application was made to practical life of the sixth, seventh, and eighth Commandments.

(3.) It follows that it is left to the spiritually enlightened Christian conscience to determine how best to carry out in practice the moral principle that on the seventh day we ought to rest from our labours in order to draw near to God. The very statement of the rule prepares us to meet with much difference of opinion and practice in its application. Some, thinking only of the highest needs of the spiritual life, will prescribe a puritanical strictness; others, "knowing whereof we are made," remembering how hard it is for the young, or the ignorant, to bear the continuous strain of high-pitched emotion, or the painful restraint of bodily inactivity, will permit various relaxations from the stricter rule. The body needs exercise, and they accordingly permit and encourage the quiet Sunday walk. The mind needs change and diversity of interest, and they recommend the occasional perusal of such secular books as shall not be out of harmony with the spirit and purpose of the day. And because the poor man has no private gallery or library of his own, they recommend that at fitting hours the public galleries and libraries shall be thrown open for his use. I confess that I belong to the more lenient and liberal school. And yet I cannot help viewing with deep anxiety some of the most recent manifestations of Sabbatical relaxation.

I see rich people, especially the young of those

classes, treating the Lord's Day mainly as a day of amusement. For them, its sacred exercises, if they ever begin, end after an early morning service. Then comes the boating excursion, or the lawn-tennis party, with its gay jests and boisterous mirth, to end with a late and elaborate dinner, which makes public worship for servants impossible. This is a form of Sunday desecration for which no excuse whatever can be made. The classes who practise it have abundant leisure for athletic and noisy amusements on the other days of the week. And not only do they lose themselves the mental and spiritual benefits of a well and quietly spent Sunday, but show also by their worldly self-indulgence, a wanton and insolent contempt of the feelings of their pious neighbours. To them I would commend such questions as these : Is not the Sabbath rest given to us in order that we may hold communion with God ? And can you think that this purpose is being attained by such loud mirth and unrestrained merriment as are the natural outcome of your amusements ? If the Sabbath is to be retained for its holy uses, must there not be some publicly recognized rules for its observance ? and is it not true that to break through those recognized rules, when once they have been established, is to encourage wilfulness, to injure dependants, and to imperil seriously the public welfare ? It is not a light thing, believe me, to bring the Sabbath into contempt.

One might perhaps expect the poor man to be

more jealous of any infringement of his Sabbatical privilege of rest. And yet how frequently do we find him the very worst offender against this merciful law. How often on country roads one meets with great vans full of working people, who are evidently bent on spending the whole of God's day in rough amusements. And then, if one follows them to the end of their journey, at some quiet country inn, how often one finds the sacred hours spent in drinking, dancing, and riotous, noisy horse-play; in amusements and practices which would be degrading and injurious on any day of the week. Do those working men ever reflect, I wonder, that in their unscrupulous employment of drivers and bar-waiters on the Lord's Day, they are being guilty of an oppression of which they may become themselves one day the victims; and that by their wanton secularization of the Lord's Day, they are doing what they can to break down that divine authority which alone secures it for them as a day of rest? If you make the Lord's Day nothing better than a day of riotous amusement, you will soon find it turned into a day of work, and may then have to lament the rest and spiritual privileges which you have lost, when it is too late to regain them.

I am not sure that I can approve even of the latest relaxation of the Lord's Day which certain of the Christian Churches have allowed themselves. I allude to what are popularly known as Pleasant Sunday Afternoons. I have not myself been present

at any of these gatherings, but I am informed by those who have attended them that at present the entertainment provided in some places of worship largely consists of solo-singing, which is interrupted by applause, just as if the concert were held in a school-room. Now in forming a judgment of these entertainments I cannot forget two things. First, that the main occupations of the Lord's Day are religious teaching and worship; and, secondly, that it is the Church's first duty to take care that these be bright, reverent, and edifying. In a former address I have intimated my opinion that on week-days, and in proper places, the Church ought to help to supply and regulate the amusements of the people. It is a different matter, however, when amusement is supplied in the house of prayer, in a form calculated to disturb the sacred associations of the place, and at a time when it will enter into competition with religious teaching. These concerts are commonly held, I am told, on the Sunday afternoon—the special part of the Lord's Day which has been hitherto devoted to Sunday School teaching. I would not depreciate the value of the morning teaching, but still I think it is everywhere allowed that the best part of the day for teacher and scholar is the afternoon, when there is full time for careful instruction and unbroken attention. If the newly-devised recreations should interfere with this teaching, substituting amusement for instruction, and, as it were, justifying this substitution by the invitation

and authority of the Church itself, it will be an unmitigated evil. I counsel you, my reverend brethren, to have nothing to do with these things. Remember the beautiful words of Archdeacon Hessey respecting the day of the Lord: "It is a day which from its very character draws us away from the ordinary things of this life—life's labours and cares—and bids us, with hearts swept and garnished, invite the Lord's presence. It is a day set apart—a day for religion." I do not ask you to deny to the tired toiler such quiet recreation as he can take without depriving others of their Sabbath rest. I do not ask you to set up a number of minute Rabbinical rules for Sabbatical observance, or to judge, without the right, your brother's Christian liberty in what he allows; but I do ask you, as Christian ministers, to bear in mind that "the Lord's Day is a day for religion," and that it is your duty to spend your whole time and strength in making the religion of the day happy, reverent, and profitable.

PREACHING

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I HAVE brought to a conclusion my visitation of the sixty parishes comprised in the Rural Deaneries of Garstang, the Fylde, and Preston.

Of these districts the first is purely rural with small and scattered populations. Uniform as the conditions of life may seem to be in such a district as this, it is nevertheless difficult to find a measure of the comparative efficiency of clerical work within it, which shall be absolutely fair and practically useful. The condition of spiritual work in a parish does not depend on the clergyman alone. Regard must also be had to the history of the parish, to the activity of Nonconformist bodies within it, and above all to the worldly circumstances and spiritual character of the leading laity. If, then, I point out that the relation between the number of communicants and that of the population varies in those parishes between about one in five, and one in forty, I do but furnish you with a rough test of comparative efficiency. Still if it be in any respect a real test, it points to the fact that in some parishes there should

be strenuous efforts towards improvement. In such parishes I observe an utter absence of classes or unions for the instruction and encouragement of communicants, and while fully admitting the difficulty of maintaining such classes in rural districts, I think that some attempt should be made to furnish aid and support to our young communicants, either by means of classes, or in some other way. In some parishes I observe that help is afforded to the young by means of Bible classes and guilds, but too little attention seems to be paid generally to the wants of our young men. I am glad to find that this want is to a considerable extent supplied by the technical classes of the County Council, which are doing a good work in elevating the interests and enlarging the mental horizon of the future fathers of families.

Very much the same observations may be made as to the rural districts of the Fylde, though here I think that the standard of efficiency is generally higher. In this district again, there are large town populations like those at Blackpool, Fleetwood, and Kirkham. In these the work is generally efficient and satisfactory, though it is in some respects hampered by the peculiar habits and conditions of a marine population. In Preston, speaking generally, there is evidence that both the clergy and the laity have a deep sense of their Christian responsibility, though in some parishes the superstition that the clergy are the Church is not yet entirely outgrown. With respect to education Preston is peculiarly

situated, there being no School Board in the town, and all the primary schools being in consequence voluntary schools. I have only of course inspected those which belong to the Church of England, but I can say in respect of them that in general they fully come up to the standard of Manchester and Salford, while in some cases they are decidedly above that standard. Of many schools it is certainly to be admitted that much yet remains to be done to bring their buildings up to the desired standard of sanitary and educational efficiency. But I am persuaded that all which is necessary can easily be achieved, if Churchmen will respond heartily and liberally to the appeal which is now being made to them. I say all which is necessary, not all which may be demanded, for I do not think that all which is now being demanded is necessary. I speak especially of the demand which I am told is being made, or is imminent, for the provision of spacious playgrounds. I do not doubt that if such playgrounds had been furnished when first the schools were built, this would have been a great advantage. But town children are accustomed to playing in the street, and when the provision of large playgrounds would involve, as in many cases it would, a ruinous expenditure (whether to School Boards or voluntary managers), I think it may be sufficient to provide what is necessary, and not all which any one could desire.

My reverend brethren, it has been my custom in these visitation addresses to speak to you upon some

subject of pressing practical interest in connection with the sacred work of the ministry. To-day, accordingly, I have resolved to address to you a few observations upon preaching. I am deeply sensible at once of the difficulty and importance of this subject. Of its importance in a Church which professes to address the emotions through the understanding it is not easy to speak in terms of exaggeration. It may be true that in the past men were disposed to make too much of preaching, treating the sermon as if it were the principal part of the service, and the minister as little more than a sermon-maker. But exaggerations of this kind commonly produce reaction, and I am not sure that in our own time the reaction in our estimate of the place and importance of preaching has not gone too far. Preachers may have been painfully prosy. It may have been necessary to use strong language about the length and dulness of sermons. The demand is certainly reasonable that after a long service the sermon shall not be of a tedious length, and that those who are obliged to listen shall not be compelled to listen to dull commonplaces clothed in slovenly forms of expression. But when men go so far as to demand that the sermon shall be entirely omitted, or shall be preached only by the members of a preaching order, or only at stated and distant periods, they are forgetting the true place of teaching in the Christian Church. Let us beware how we forget St. Paul's strong statement : "that it hath pleased God by the foolishness of

preaching to save them that believe," or that our Lord's last great commission to His Church runs thus: "Go ye into all the world, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them." No doubt men can be taught as well by the words of a prayer, and the actions of a Sacrament, as by the address of a preacher: and yet it is not the less true that if the teaching of prayer and Sacrament is to become practically efficient, and to be applied to the daily wants of our heart and intellect, it must be by the stated and systematic instruction of the preacher.

What then shall I say to you, my reverend brethren, on this vast and momentous theme? Some things, perhaps, I may safely neglect. I am speaking to those who have all their lives been preachers, and who may be assumed to have studied and mastered much that belongs to the more mechanical, and, so to speak, artistic aspects of their work. Of these, then, I need say but little. Let me rather address myself to those parts of our common task which are of essential and abiding importance.

One or two preliminary questions it may be well, however, at the outset to endeavour to dispose of. Is it well, let us ask in the first place, that the parochial clergyman should abdicate the office of preacher, surrendering this part of his ministerial task to an order of men specially trained to undertake it? The question is not, you will see, whether the parochial clergyman shall be helped by specially trained men, but whether he shall wholly or largely

surrender his preaching office to these? I cannot think with some that this question should be answered in the affirmative. The offices of pastor and teacher have, I believe, a deep and even necessary connection. Without that intimate knowledge of men's thoughts, needs, and habits which the pastor alone can obtain, preaching must very largely miss its mark, or fall short of practical efficiency. The orator who elaborates his impassioned appeals in solitude may command more of admiration, but it is commonly the faithful pastor whose homely and searching words find their way most surely to the heart. If, again, the preacher loses much in missing the close, individual scrutiny of the pastor, this latter will certainly suffer on his part no slight diminution of personal influence and authority, if he cannot speak to his people as their recognized public instructor. In a word, that separation of the two offices which some in these days are advocating would, it seems to me, be injurious to both, and not less injurious to the spiritual interests of the laity.

Much of what I have just said will apply equally to the question whether the preacher shall use largely the homiletic compositions of others.

It seems to me, I confess, that these can seldom be such as would at once utter the thoughts of the preacher and meet the wants of the hearers. Few are aware how much the effect of a sermon depends on the preacher's interest in it, nor again how much this latter is enhanced by making a discourse the

expression of its author's present feelings and convictions. What has been recently composed, what has sprung living and fresh from the thoughts and emotions of to-day, will be delivered with a force and earnestness which no other words, however eloquent, could excite. The very turn of a sentence or the tone of an illustration in words of our own composition will give that sense of ownership in what we are saying, which is ordinarily necessary to an earnest and natural delivery. I say nothing about the more than doubtful morality of passing off as your own the composition of another, as I assume that whenever you preached a sermon not of your own composition, you would publicly announce the fact. And yet, even so, I cannot think that the preaching of the sermons of others is free from serious objection. The preacher then stands and is felt to stand in the position of the actor. He is uttering words which he may only half believe, he is trying to give expression to sentences which in their existing form he could not or would not have composed ; and all this will throw an air of unreality upon what he is doing—just when and where the impression of unreality is most fatal to success. It is the greatest triumph of the actor to deliver the words of others so naturally that they might be taken for his own. Very rarely, and only by the greatest actors, is that triumph achieved. It goes without saying, then, that it could rarely, if ever, be attained by the ordinary preacher, whose professed delivery of the sermons of others would almost cer-

tainly have the faults of coldness, constraint, and, worst of all, of artificial straining after effect.

Perhaps, however, the best answer to such questions as these is to be found in an adequate conception of the aim and office of the sermon. This, I think, we shall most of us be ready to acknowledge is to make men so know and love Christ that they shall determine to become like Him. If this be accepted as the more or less conscious aim of every sermon, then it is obvious in the first place that no sermon is successful, but that which lays such a constraint upon the will as to affect a man's life and character. If, then, a sermon simply instructs the understanding, or excites the emotions, or alarms the conscience, and does nothing more, it is a failure. It may have won for the preacher a reputation for ability or eloquence; it may even have excited the interest or stimulated the pleasurable enthusiasm of the hearer, but as a sermon it has failed; for it has not succeeded in laying its grasp on the will, and through it, in producing an effect on the life and character. Think, then, how difficult is the task, often so lightly undertaken, of the preacher of the Gospel of Christ. Unless he makes men will to be like Christ, he has failed. Do not then most of us fail in most of our sermons? Nay, might not the sense of our numerous failures, when we come to look them fairly in the face, almost smite some of us with the paralysis of despair? Certainly the best of us may have too much cause for self-reproach and

searchings of heart, but not, I think, for hopelessness or despair. When a man undertakes a task of confessed difficulty, the difficulty itself is a reason for patience and moderated hopes. And who can fail to perceive the difficulties with which a preacher of the Gospel has to contend. First he is met and resisted by a natural pre-disposition to selfishness, next by evil habits which have acquired almost the force of a second nature, and thirdly and chiefly by that invincible repugnance to think of God and eternity and the eternal issues of our earthly conduct, which results from evil habits of thought and life.

Then we must remember that our message, though it be from heaven, is an oft-told tale which men are apt to disregard because they know it so well ; because, as ordinarily told, it excites in them so little intellectual interest or emotional pleasure. Our work, then, cannot be done easily. Success in it can only be attained by much labour and pains, by slow degrees, by adding stroke to stroke and appeal to appeal, by much patience, by a courage which is daunted by no difficulties, and by a perseverance which is willing to begin again with no remission of energy, after any number of failures. If, then, my reverend brethren, we be of the number of those (and alas ! I find that they are more numerous than I could have expected) who are disposed to give up any effort which is found to be difficult, then we have certainly mistaken our vocation in offering ourselves as the ambassadors of God to men. Assuredly this is a

calling as honourable as it is sacred ; but it can only then be a useful and happy calling when a man gives to it the whole energy of his body, and the whole-hearted and life-long devotion of his soul. If we are to move men and to win them for Christ, we must show them that we love them and believe in them ; that we discern in the worst of them the remains, however broken and defaced, of the image of God ; that we believe in the restoration of that image ; that there is nothing on earth which we would not do or sacrifice in the effort to restore it ; that we measure the limits of our service, not by legal or any other obligation, but only by the extent of men's needs and of our own bodily and spiritual capacity ; and that accordingly for the love of our people, and of our dear Lord who died for them, we are ready to spend and be spent for them, without either numbering the hours, or counting the cost. Without a devotion as complete as this, no particular plans or methods can make us successful preachers of the Gospel.

Granting, however, that such devotion exists, then the question of the best means of discharging our duty becomes one of immense interest and importance. Let me then venture here to say to you a very few words of counsel as to means and methods. I fear my remarks on this matter may appear to some to be fragmentary, but the vast extent of the subject may, perhaps, to some extent excuse this.

If, as I have said, we are to appeal to the will through the understanding, it is obvious in the first

place that we must have some regard to the amount of knowledge possessed by our hearers. This caution is specially needed in the large towns of this Diocese, and when dealing with a population so naturally intelligent and so generally well-instructed as that of Lancashire. For this reason we should know at least the well-established conclusions of science, whether physical, archæological, or critical, not that we may preach scientific sermons, but that we may know the scientific point of view from which our subject is probably being considered by many of our hearers: and above all that we may be able to avoid the crude statements on such subjects which are so offensive to those who have a tincture of scientific knowledge. There can be little danger in seeking such an acquaintance with scientific results, for the more we know of any science, the more we shall see the folly of speaking as if with the authority of an expert, the more modest shall we be in our assertions and criticisms, and the more careful in introducing scientific illustrations. With general literature it will perhaps be profitable that our acquaintance should be somewhat wider and more exact. There are few men in our town congregations, and still fewer women, who have not some acquaintance with the higher forms of poetry and fiction. And no one can have studied the powerful sketches of character contained in the best modern stories, without being profoundly affected by them. If, then, the preacher cannot be safely ignorant of

what is deeply affecting the character and opinions of his people, it is certain that he should know something of the better and more influential forms of modern fiction. I do not mean that he should openly refer in the pulpit to many of the characters of our popular stories, but only that he should know enough about them to deepen what is good, or condemn what is evil in the moral principles which they embody or illustrate. In general, I may observe, that the wider a man's knowledge is of science and literature, of history and biography, the more is he likely to set forth those aspects of a subject which are interesting and spiritually valuable, to illustrate them adequately, and above all to avoid such narrow views and such ignorant dogmatism as are equally injurious to the ignorant, and offensive to the wise.

Still more important is it to a clergyman to attain a knowledge of the human heart, of its powers and faculties, its insights and generousities, its sins and infirmities, its hopes and aspirations. And these things we shall best learn not in formal treatises (though of course these are not without their use), but by studying our own inward changes and spiritual movements, and the hearts and lives of our parishioners. Such a study will make us acquainted with the besetting sins and peculiar trials of those whom we address, and will enable us to display in the most practical and moving manner, the necessary connection between sin and suffering, between prayer

and steadfastness, between obedience and inward peace.

Best and most important of all, however, to a clergyman, will be a large and accurate acquaintance with Holy Scripture. It is from its sacred pages that he must draw the substance both of his instruction and appeals. Here alone will he find a clear statement of God's nature and His relation to man, of human sin and its danger, of Divine redemption and its privileges, of Christian grace and its triumphs. From Holy Scripture, too, will he draw the truest picture of that inward life of spiritual struggle and temptation which is the real source and explanation of all outward failure and prosperity, whether individual or national. In the light which streams from the sacred page, the preacher will be enabled to survey with prophetic eye, the true character and tendency of all those social and political forces which seem so irresistible and inexplicable to the mere eye of flesh: while at the same time he will be enabled to point out from the faithful biography of the saints of old, what are those rocks and quicksands upon which so many of the unwary make shipwreck.

Such studies as these will also suggest to him the most profitable choice of subjects.

If, my brethren, you preach, as is usual, from a text, it will at once save time in the selection of your subject, and contribute to thoroughness in its treatment, if you make your choice of a text early in the

week. It may again save you no little trouble, and may contribute at the same time to the edification of your people, if you take your text from some of the portions of Holy Scripture which are appointed to be read in the services of the day. This will especially be the case if there be anything in the appointed Lessons, in the Gospel, or the Epistle, which is likely to arrest attention by its depth or difficulty.

If you pass such passages over unnoticed people will be apt to feel a sense of disappointment. At another time perhaps they might have thought the introduction of unusual subjects unpractical or confusing, but when the reading of a difficult passage has called attention to it, they will be disposed to thank you for help to its understanding and application. It will be another great advantage arising from this practice that, if it be your purpose to rebuke some prevailing vice, or to inculcate some neglected virtue, the Church's selection of the passage upon which you base your instruction will give it less the appearance of harshness or severity.

We should never, I am persuaded, allow the great ecclesiastical seasons to pass by unimproved. To do so is not only to produce inevitable disappointment, but also to miss a golden opportunity. The habits of Christian thought, and not less the services of the Church, excite a lively interest in the great event or truth commemorated at such times. People are prepared to think about it, and expect to have their

attention directed to its deeper meaning and spiritual lessons. To follow, again, the round of the Church's seasons will be to give your people a tolerably complete view of the whole circle of doctrinal truth, and thus to guard them against partial or exaggerated views of particular doctrines.

When, again, a clergyman has attained to some ripeness in his Scriptural knowledge, it will, I believe, be a useful practice to give on Sunday afternoons or evenings a series of expository discourses on some book of Holy Scripture. This, my reverend brethren, will greatly enlarge your own and your people's knowledge of Divine truth, and will naturally introduce, from time to time, the consideration of important subjects, to which it would not be otherwise either easy or useful to refer. It might, for instance, be thought strange or inappropriate to preach a course of sermons on schism, litigiousness, and impurity, but no one would object to the introduction of these subjects in a course of sermons on the first Epistle to the Corinthians. Many other incidental advantages of such a practice might be mentioned. Thus it will enable you to explain naturally, in connection with their fitting context and surroundings, many of those obscure passages which are seized upon by an ignorant fanaticism, or an itch for notoriety as occasions for schism or heresy. Such a practice will contribute again, in no slight degree, to deliver you from the cramping fetters of narrow dogmatic systems, and, not least important, it will add

variety and interest to your teaching. Paley relates that after he began this practice, a congregation which had consisted of a few aged persons, advanced from under twenty to above two hundred. If such were the result in his time, how much more certainly may the studious clergyman look for such improvement now, when we have helps like those furnished by the expository discourses of Deans Vaughan and Stanley, of Bishops Lightfoot and Westcott, and of so many other learned and eloquent divines?

Abundant opportunity may still be found on Sunday mornings for the treatment of any subjects which may be suggested by local or national vicissitudes. I believe that there are few subjects of deep popular interest which may not be freely introduced, if at the same time they be carefully handled, in the pulpit. I would not wholly exclude even politics. In a free country like ours political questions not only excite the deepest interest, but also contribute in no slight degree (by the mental and moral effort which they stimulate) to form the opinions and habits of our people. Political activity thus meets the preacher in the very sphere where he seeks to influence the will, and must become, of course, either his ally or his enemy. As, then, he cannot ignore political influence, how, it may be asked, is he to deal with it?

We shall reach, I believe, the true answer to this question by calling to remembrance the great aim and object of our preaching. If we desire to affect

and improve the character of our people, we must look upon political discussions as the expression not of the opinions of a party, but of great moral principles. If those principles be good, we shall, of course, commend them, no matter by what party they are professed, and if they are evil we shall as emphatically condemn them, even though they be advocated by our nearest friends. Unless, then, it be pretended that one of our political parties is always morally right, and the other as uniformly morally wrong, it will be impossible for the clergyman to be, at least in the pulpit, a thoroughly party man. If he be faithful to his high vocation he will be found to-day supporting one side, and to-morrow the other, not by name, but in effect, not because it is nominally Liberal or Conservative, but because it is guided in his judgment by Christian motives and principles.

I have avoided, as you will see, all merely technical questions such as those of style, and manner of address and delivery, not because I think them unimportant, but because it is less necessary to refer to them before such an audience as this. I cannot, however, conclude without calling attention, in words more eloquent than my own, to a great man's idea of what sermons should be and should not be. They should not be such as are thus described by Bishop Wilberforce: "Sermons with prefaces of inordinate length, porches larger than the buildings to which they lead, collections of truisms repeated with a calm perseverance of dull repetition which is almost mar-

vellous ; vague generalities about the Fall and about Redemption, as if those awful mysteries were empty words, and not living burning realities." They should not contain "faint and general descriptions of sinners such as can reach no sinner in particular, mere outlines of men in the abstract, instead of portraits of living individuals amongst which each hearer shall find himself." They should not be such as these, but "should be inspired by some one definite and fixed purpose, by some great Gospel truth which they inculcate, some great promise which they unfold, some sin which they expose, some definite conception of Christ and His redemption which they declare." Such sermons men will hear and God will bless. Of such sermons we may humbly hope that they will be preached with the unction of "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," and that they will become, on the lips of Christ's faithful minister "the power of God unto salvation."



CATECHIZING

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I AM at length drawing near to the end of my searching and prolonged visitation. But before I come to the last page of its record, I desire to say to you a few words on the lessons which it has taught me respecting our duties to the children and the childlike. I shall say those words not inappropriately in Bolton, where in many of the parishes there is, I believe, very insufficient provision for the systematic religious instruction of our young men and women.

Very soon I shall have finished the work of catechising, in schools containing more than 200,000 children, and I must say that I have never done any work in my life which is more full of interest and promise. I have discovered among other things that catechising requires the best efforts of a well-furnished mind, and that thus to set novices to do this work is a terrible mistake. There is no subject too deep, no method too logical, no power of expression too large, no breadth of reading too wide for it. Can you think clearly, speak simply, and

draw on a vast variety of illustration? Then you are just the man for this work; and if you add to these qualifications a real love for children, you will not spend a moment in it without fruit. Nowhere are there to be found minds so open, hearts so warm, trust so charming, brightness and love so infectious, as amongst the children. I do not envy the man, however great and high-placed, who can look into the faces of the children of the poor without feeling himself warmed and blessed and stimulated and purified. Only thus can you fully enter into the meaning of our Lord's wonderful words, "Except ye turn and become as little children ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Some have asked me if the work of catechising children be not monotonous. I can only say that I have never found it so. Many a time it has dispelled the feeling of discouragement and the sense of weariness, and I have found it throughout my visitation a continuous and ever-renewed delight. I have only had one regret, that I could not stay longer with the children, that I could not see them oftener, know them better, teach them more systematically, and give them some better and larger gift of sacred truth. From the nature of the case my catechising has had many defects. It has been unsystematic, discontinuous, and without that support in the incidents of time, place, and religious exercises which all good and complete catechising requires.

It is above all things my deep sense of these defects which has prompted me to say something to you this morning, in a systematic way, of the nature and methods of catechetical teaching. What, in the first place let me ask, do we mean by this form of teaching? The word "catechising" has several different significations. Its primary meaning, as you know, is simply "aural teaching." In course of time, however, it came to mean "aural teaching upon the fundamental verities of the 'faith.'" And as this teaching needed especially to be given to the young and uninstructed, and so required the help of simple text-books composed in the form of question and answer, the word catechism came to mean, as it is defined in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "a book of elementary instruction by means of question and answer."

Catechising then, as it is practised in the Church, may be defined to be "instruction in the fundamental verities, history, and institutions of the Christian faith, communicated in the form of dialogue." In its essence it is as Plato teaches in the *Meno*, the method of awakening in the young soul by means of apt questions the consciousness of what is involved already in the mental constitution which his Maker gave him. Christian catechising involves, of course, the additional element that certain fundamental facts are given by revelation. I do not believe, for instance, that by the mere process of questioning it would be possible to draw

forth from the natural stores of the mind such primary Christian truths as that God is Love and is our Father, or that He sent His eternal Son to save, and His eternal Spirit to sanctify us. But then, when these truths have once been communicated and received, they may be seen by the mind, when stimulated by wise questioning, to involve a rich treasure of moral and spiritual truths as their natural and necessary inferences. Such are these, that it is the highest attainment of man to become like his Divine Father, that therefore our main endeavour should be, as our *summum bonum* will be, to cultivate love—love first towards Him who so loved us as to send His Son to reveal His true nature and to save us from our sins, and next towards our human brethren, who were made to love and be loved. And because we are naturally disposed to be selfish, and to find perfect love hard of attainment, we ought to pray to our Heavenly Father to give us the help of His Divine Spirit of Love, and to enable us to follow the example of that Incarnate Saviour, who alone amongst men has presented the perfect realization of such love in our nature.

Over and over again in my visitation of our primary schools I have found it easy, by the method of catechising, to stimulate in ordinary children a perception of these glorious spiritual inferences, and at the same time to avail myself of their occasional blunders at once to clear their thoughts, and to deepen their impressions. For let it never be for-

gotten that the mistakes of the scholar are amongst the most precious of the auxiliaries of instruction. They show the teacher when he is assuming knowledge which does not exist, and they give him fresh points of departure which he could not have discovered for himself, while for the learner they create links of mental association which no subsequent forgetfulness can break or obliterate. It is in this way that our scholars will discover more that finds and raises them in the Socratic dialogue of catechising than they could, or than their elders often do, in the comparatively dull monologue of the sermon. I believe, my reverend brethren, that we sermonise too much in these days. For myself, I must say that when I want to teach anything I often feel impatient of the slow, stately, solitary march of the sermon. I long for a method more broken, more discursive, more social, so to speak. I wish to be interrupted by the question of the learner, and to be at liberty to put questions to him to see if he understands me, if he is keeping pace not only with the march of thought, but also with the inspiration of feeling, with the enthusiasm naturally generated by the opening and broadening light of truth.

I anticipate the objection at this point, that if questions were freely allowed at our public exercises, the teachers themselves might often be disconcerted by the irreverent or vexatious questions of professed sceptics. But surely there would be no danger of

this when we catechised children, and only asked their elders to be listeners. This would not give us in our public services the purely Socratic dialogue, with its mutual cross-questioning of equals, and its sometimes heated controversy; but rather the instruction of the uninformed by a method which would stir all minds into strong and interested activity. If such teaching be carefully prepared, and kept, in spite of its spontaneous breaks, in a course of clear, logical, solid exposition, there need be no fear that it would fail to attract the attendance of elder people. Of such teaching as this, when given at the Hyacinthe Chapel of the Madeleine at Paris, Bishop Dupanloup tells us: "I have seen parents come in such numbers to the catechism, that, besides numerous places which had been reserved for them on both sides of the sanctuary, and at the bottom of the Hyacinthe chapel, a gallery had to be erected to provide more places, and that even was not enough." No doubt the teachers in this case were very superior men, but lest any one should think that their success was due simply to their superiority, the same writer adds in another part of his book on the ministry of catechising: "Love the children, and everything is gained, everything is done. There is no question here of having genius; not the least in the world do I demand of a catechist a superior intellect: no, give me, if you have him, a man with good sense (for that is always necessary) and of an average intelligence; but above all, a man who has a heart

which knows how to love, how to devote itself, and with that he will work wonders."

So far I have spoken of catechising in general, but now I desire to say a few words upon two special forms of it: that which is employed in preparation for Confirmation and the first Communion, and that which is connected with what the Roman Catholics call "catechisms of perseverance."

We have already our catechetical classes in preparation for the first Communion, and, besides, a manual of doctrine in our Church catechism unequalled for simplicity, comprehensiveness, and Divine authority. These classes, however, are not, it seems to me, without their defects both of form and method.

First, I do not think we surround them with such signs of care and solemnity as may declare our sense of their importance. They are too commonly held in a schoolroom where the bare forms, secular associations, and general air of discomfort tend inevitably to carelessness or depression of spirits. Bingham tells us that while it is not easy to determine whether catechumens in the primitive Church were instructed within the Church, or in the *pastophoria* or baptisterium outside it, it is very certain that the great catechetical schools of Alexandria under Clement and Origen were held in some place belonging to the Church. In France, too, Bishop Dupanloup insists that order, solemnity, and a religious air and feeling should be secured for the "catechisms of first Com-

munion," by assembling their members in a special chapel connected with the church. It appears, indeed, to be a common practice now in France on the erection of new churches, and even in the improvement of ancient ones, to build a special chapel for catechumens. Where this may not be done, it surely cannot be difficult to separate some part of the church by the erection of hangings for this purpose, and so to surround our young catechumens with the quiet, comfort, and religious feeling which will predispose them to listen with attention, and to attend with profit. Again, the time of instruction should be longer than I fear is often thought sufficient for this deeply important ministry. Never again, probably, will these young people give us so uninterrupted an attendance, or so undivided an attention; and never again shall we find them with minds so open and ingenuous, or with hearts so warm and impressionable. Surely then three months of preparation cannot be too long—it is indeed all too short—for the improvement of so precious and unique an opportunity. Then again, I think we need a reform in our method of instruction. At present our teaching is too monotonous, too didactic, too superficial. It lacks variety, solidity, thoroughness. It would greatly relieve the tediousness of instruction if we more systematically broke up our teaching into the form of question and answer, and if we brightened and relieved it by sacred song. We should divide our instruction into definite portions logically related

and between the parts, give out well-chosen hymns with popular and simple tunes. Again, it would greatly stimulate attention and promote edification if we required our scholars to make an abstract of the lesson which has been given, and to send it to the catechist, who would bring it to the next meeting of the class, carefully corrected and annotated, reading out perhaps for the benefit of all, passages from those which were best done. This would not only excite emulation among the scholars, but also require clear and logical treatment of his subject on the part of the teacher. If lessons are to be remembered, there must be in them neither confusion of thought nor obscurity of expression. All must be well prepared and arranged; every irrelevant thought and every redundant word being remorselessly excised. Lessons like this will not be without a grave eloquence of their own. They will be impressive by their weight and simplicity, and will produce not so much admiration of the teacher, as interest in what is taught; not the shallow sentiment which blazes up quickly like fire among thorns only to be as quickly extinguished, but the firm apprehension and deep and abiding love of Divine truth and of Him who is its Author.

Let us not either, my reverend brethren, forget to brighten and relieve our instruction by well-chosen illustrations and apposite stories. "Stories!" cries a great master of this art. "You know how the word acts like magic on children, there is nothing they

are more eager for, nothing gives them so much pleasure. They tremble with excitement directly they are promised one, they wait for it impatiently, they listen to it with the utmost greediness." Of course, he adds, the story must be well-chosen and well-told, it must fix and not distract the attention. Such stories are not often met with; but every good catechist will have a store of them, a store continually increasing, and always carefully arranged and classified. I may seem to be making heavy claims upon you, my reverend brethren, but then I would entreat you to remember the great opportunities and vast importance of this ministry. Think of the freshness, the sensitiveness, the tenderness, the candour, the trustfulness of these young minds; how readily they open themselves to the approach of light; what a sweet eagerness they show for knowledge and direction. Remember, above all, that youth is the season when habits are formed, when belief has a direct influence on character, and that the youth is the father of the man. In these children we have before us the men of the future, and it is by them that the destiny of that future is to be determined.

I have kept you rather long on this part of our subject, but I must not forget that I have yet something to say to you on the catechising of those who have already become communicants, those, one may roughly say, between the age of fifteen and twenty-five. Any one may see at a glance the necessity of

such institutions. Who is ignorant of the terrible loss which the Church suffers in most parishes from the defection of those who have, after their Confirmation, made a first Communion? Who can shut his eyes to the fact that very large numbers of our artisans cease even to attend places of worship or to retain faith in anything but the objects of the senses? I know indeed, and I rejoice to know it, that in many parishes of Lancashire, and especially in Bolton, we have large Sunday Bible classes of adults of all ages from fifteen even to fifty or sixty years of age. But, as I have said, these classes do not prevent a fatal leakage of large numbers of our confirmees: nor, I must add, from their usual methods of teaching are they likely to do so in the future. The lessons delivered in them have too often the nature of mere lectures, and they are commonly lacking in clearness, comprehensiveness, and breadth of treatment. What we want is something which shall be ancillary to these, mixed classes of young men and young women, which shall be conducted on a broader and more interesting plan, and taught mainly, though not exclusively, by the clergy. We want classes which shall have the general character of those "catechisms of first Communion" which I have already described, which shall resemble them in their large use of sacred song, of written abstracts, of stories, of vivid illustrations, and of bright and periodically recurring festivals, while, at the same time, they approach more nearly to the large and comprehensive methods

of treatment which are more suitable to a developed intelligence, and which found place in the earlier periods of the Church's history.

Examples of such institutes or academies of sacred learning are furnished to us not only in the modern French "catechisms or academies of perseverance," but also in the celebrated catechetical schools of Alexandria, Carthage, and Jerusalem. St. Cyril, as you know, has left us a remarkable series of catechetical lectures, and St. Augustine has given us his ideal of such lectures in his bright little treatise, *De Catechizandis rudibus*. We may get some idea of the subjects of such a course of lectures at Jerusalem in the middle of the fourth century from the fourth of St. Cyril's lectures. In this lecture he treats, among other subjects, of these :—"On God ; on Christ, the Eternal Son of God ; on the Incarnation, and its consequences ; on the Holy Ghost ; on the future Judgment, its period and method ; on the soul of man, its nature and destiny ; on the body, its meat, its apparel, its dangers and its dignity ; on the resurrection, and on the Divine Scriptures." You see how wide a survey is here implied of religious truth. Nor is the treatment of each of these questions unworthy of the breadth of view with which our author conceives their relation to each other. Thus in the sixth lecture, in which St. Cyril treats of "The Unity of God," he takes occasion to review the origin of heresies, and the false religious philosophy of his own time as de-

veloped by Basilides, Valentinus, and especially by Manes ; while in the tenth lecture on "God as the Creator of all Things," he endeavours to illustrate the greatness and majesty of God by the wonder of His works in earth and heaven ; making herein the pregnant remark (as true for our days as for his), that "God will appear the greater to each, as the man hath attained a large survey of His creatures, and when by that survey his soul is raised aloft, he gains a more excellent conception of God." The great African Father writes his treatise for the benefit of one Deogratias, a deacon, who had complained that he frequently found his catechetical instruction a weariness even to himself. St. Augustine proceeds first to indicate to him what are the probable causes of his difficulty, and what are the best means of removing it ; and then proceeds to give at considerable length a model of catechetical instruction, first in a longer, and then in a shorter form. In substance these model lessons consist of a review of the historical contents of the Old and New Testaments ; making a selection of the most significant and profitable parts of the sacred history, dwelling on the great turning points of the story, and neglecting what is of less moment to the great aim of the whole. In the treatment of these to us familiar subjects, he states clearly and very shortly each fact in its order ; and spends most of his space in applying its lessons to the thoughts, needs, fortunes, and life of the Church of Christ. A thoughtful perusal

of these two works may suggest to us, I think, a very profitable application of their methods to our own needs. We have advantages for the pursuit of such studies out of all comparison greater than those possessed by these eminent Fathers. With what gratitude, for instance, would they have welcomed such an account of the antiquities of Egypt and Chaldæa as is furnished to us in *The Records of the Past*, or such an exposition of the text of the Bible as is given to us in the series published by Clarke, and Williams and Norgate? or, again, such a criticism of the composition and contents of Holy Scripture as is set forth in the works of Canon Driver and Professor Robertson Smith? How little they knew of the glory of God's works by comparison with that which is suggested to us in such a story of the heavens as that by Sir Robert Ball, and such a story of the earth as that by Professor Bonney. How slight was their acquaintance with the relation of the spirit to the body of man, compared to that which is put within our reach by such works as that of Dr. Carpenter on Mental Physiology, and that of Le Conte on Evolution. On every side, in every direction, philosophical, scientific, critical, and expository, the treasures of human knowledge have been poured out to us in rich abundance, and lie ready to the hand of the modern catechist who shall endeavour to do for the youths of England what St. Cyril and St. Augustine did for the uninstructed of their days. I hear the complaint often made that evening classes cannot

be made interesting to our young people. Let me then suggest to you, my reverend brethren, a course of lectures for successive years, which, properly treated, with the help of cultivated laymen, schoolmasters, doctors, lawyers, and scholars, could not fail to excite the interest and secure the attendance of our young men and maidens.

(1.) On the Old Testament considered as a preparation for Christianity.

(2.) On the Holy Gospels—or a harmony of the four—considered as a record of the revelation of God in Christ; and a history of redemption.

(3.) On the Acts and selected portions of the Epistles, regarded as a history of the character and institutions of the Apostolic Church.

(4.) A history of the Church in four successive periods—

(a) from the Apostles to the age of Constantine;

(β) from Constantine to the fall of the Roman Empire;

(γ) during the Middle Ages;

(δ) from the Reformation to our own century.

(5.) The history of doctrine in successive periods, with the help of the history of Hagenbach and others.

(6.) The history, meaning, and aim of our public worship and liturgical services.

(7.) The relation of religion to science—critical and physical.

(8.) The relation of Christianity to other religions—especially to Buddhism and Mohammedanism.

I may seem to suggest to you, my reverend brethren, a difficult and laborious task. But think of the need! Think of the rapid growth of scepticism and indifference in our days. Think of the value of souls. Think how Christ loved them, and served them even unto death. Oh! if we love souls as our Divine Master loved them (and if in some large measure we do not, are we fit to be Christian ministers?); if we love souls, I say, as Christ loved them, shall we not, delight to spend our utmost energies to rescue them from sin and unbelief, and to restore to them the love of Him who is alone fully worthy of our love? and who is to be loved, as Augustine nobly says, "not in the way in which any object which is seen with the eyes is loved, but as wisdom is loved, and truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and charity . . . and, further, with a love conformable to these things not as they are in men, but as they are in the very fountain of incorruptible and unchangeable wisdom."

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

THE seventeen parishes of this Rural Deanery (Tunstall) are in some respects different from any which I have hitherto visited. In area they are of considerable size, having an average extent of 4,240 acres each. But their population is small. There is only one parish which has more than 2,000 inhabitants. There are two others which have an average of 1,500, and the average population of the other fourteen parishes is no more than 355. Nor is this population, small though it be, homogeneous in its character. In most of the villages there is a considerable floating population of farm servants, who change their place of residence at periods varying from three to twelve months. It is needless to say that both the spiritual condition of the people, and the best means of improving that condition, are materially affected by these peculiar circumstances. If, for instance, I find, as I do, that thirteen of these parishes are without district visitors, I have to remember that a population of 300 can be easily and

frequently visited by the clergyman alone. I am bound to say, however, that while admitting this as a comprehensible excuse, I cannot regard it as a valid and sufficient reason for the absence or discontinuance of lay visitation. For the duty of visiting the ignorant, the sick, and the afflicted is not one which can be confined to the clergy. Every member of the body of Christ is bound to prove the reality of his faith by such care of the weak and distressed as his circumstances enable him to exercise. Can any one believe that at the last day the Divine Judge will welcome the clergy alone, because they proved their love to Him by visiting His people when they were "sick or in prison"? Where nobody visits but the clergyman there must be many members of Christ's Church who are deprived of an important means of spiritual improvement.

Again, although it may be difficult to draw farm servants, in a few weeks, into the sphere of our ordinary organizations, that is no reason why we should not endeavour to create for them such special means of instruction and social intercourse as are found possible and useful, in the case of bodies of navvies working temporarily on the local section of a railway.

A village reading-room or club provided with newspapers and sedentary games may furnish the means of making acquaintance with these temporary sojourners, and they must be strangely different from

men in general if they refuse to associate with their benefactors, as well in worship as in amusement; as well in the church as in the club-room. There is no force in the world so powerful as brotherly kindness. It blesses equally him that gives and him that takes, turning often the fleeting accidents of secular intercourse into the fruitful and abiding relationships of spiritual life. Let no one imagine that work need be less efficient because it is done within a narrow area. No doubt we lose something of the warmth and contagiousness of emotion when we leave the large assembly for the narrower association of village friends. But often what we lose in effusiveness of feeling, we gain in closer individual knowledge and contact. And who can possibly estimate the remote consequences of individual care or neglect?

"A woman named Mag, the mother of criminals, had no education. She never had a home. She grew up an outcast, neglected and despised, and she became the ancestress of a long line of criminals and paupers. In seventy-five years her descendants increased to the number of 1,200. Of these 280 were paupers, and 140 habitual criminals, while nearly the whole family gave evidence of the utmost degradation. It is said that the neglect of that one girl cost the state of New York 1,308,000 dollars." Such a case as this should suggest to us the vast importance of careful individual culture, and should serve as a warning to those who have the care of

small populations of the danger of remissness in their work.

I think that in the Rural Deanery of Tunstall this danger is specially manifested in connection with your Sunday School organization. In the whole Rural Deanery you have only 1,050 scholars, under the charge of 109 teachers. There are two parishes without any Sunday School at all, and one with only eleven scholars. If we remember that nearly one-half of these belong to the three most populous parishes, this gives a very low average for the rest. I fear that these figures represent a very inadequate appreciation of the spiritual value of this popular institution.

Let me remind you of the very conspicuous place which it fills in our English Christianity. There are in England and Wales no fewer than 5,730,000 Sunday School scholars with 617,000 teachers, of whom at least 2,550,000 scholars and 224,000 teachers are connected with the Church of England. Is it possible to estimate in terms and figures the spiritual blessings which have their source in the Sunday School, or can we adequately conceive the moral and spiritual deterioration which must follow the loss of such an agency? If, however, we perceive this without difficulty on the large scale, is it not equally evident that, in its proportion, the loss must be equally real and serious on the small scale? The parish that is without a Sunday School must be placed at a disadvantage in comparison with its

neighbour which has one. Some try to apologize for the absence or inefficiency of a Sunday School by urging that it may be replaced by catechizing in Church and children's services, or that in fact it has been superseded by the religious teaching in our day schools. I do not think that either plea will bear examination. I am heartily in favour of the practice of catechizing. I believe that in the hands of a skilful clergyman it is one of the most efficient forms of instruction; and that not only to the children, but to those of their elders who sit in church and listen. But then I also believe that there can be no better preparation for catechizing than the teaching in the Sunday School. On my present visitation I inspect our parochial day schools whenever they are open, and my examination of the children consists substantially of a process of catechizing. I always find that my catechizing is satisfactory and profitable in proportion as the children have been well and accurately taught. When children know themselves to be ignorant of the subject on which they are being questioned, they are generally found to be too shy or too proud to answer, and catechizing in such circumstances misses its aim. If the catechizing in Church is to do all the good of which it is capable, it must be preceded and prepared for by teaching in the Sunday Schools.

But, it may be urged, is not this preparation already made by the religious teaching in the day school? I think there is no one who sets a higher

value than I do on such teaching. I believe that its importance can hardly be exaggerated. And yet I am far from thinking that it is an adequate substitute for the teaching of the Sunday School. In the first place it is generally teaching in the gross—the teaching of large numbers of children together; and however skilful the teacher may be, this is always less satisfactory than the instruction of small classes, where attention can be easily paid to each scholar. But secondly, and more especially, the religious teaching of the day school has a different tone and colour from that in the Sunday School. All religious teaching consists of two parts, first of instruction in the facts and doctrines of the Christian religion, and secondly, of the application of those facts and doctrines to the life and character of the scholars. All religious instruction which is worthy of the name, whether given in the day or Sunday School, must contain both these elements; but yet, as we all know, they may be combined in different proportions. In the day school there is more of fact and doctrine; in the Sunday School there is more of the personal and practical application of these. The very day on which instruction is given in the Sunday School, and not less the fact that the only instruction given in that institution is religious, raises an expectation in the mind of the scholar, that a more pressing and personal appeal will be made to his heart and conscience. He expects more, and will bear more of this direct kind of appeal, than when he is in the day

school. And the teacher, knowing this, aims principally, and almost unconsciously, at this practical kind of influence. While, however, fully recognizing the special function of the Sunday School, I am far from underrating the force of the appeal which has been recently made for more teachers from among the cultured and influential classes. Our scholars are better taught in the day schools, and they are not likely to feel proper respect for a teacher, however pious, who betrays ignorance in his teaching. No doubt this difficulty will disappear as the best pupils of our day schools gradually pass into the ranks of the Sunday School teachers. Meanwhile, however, I must say that their desertion of the Sunday School is not creditable to the young men of our richer families. At a time when superficial unbelief is rather diminishing than increasing, I cannot think that the reason of their present attitude is to be sought in agnostic alienation. And if not, what possible explanation can be given of it, but this—that they are so addicted to Sunday amusement, or Sunday indolence, as to be incapable of the self-sacrifice involved in Sunday School teaching. It was not so in the last generation. Then men like Lord Hatherley and Lord Selborne, oppressed with the burden of vast legal responsibilities, found time and energy to teach a class every Sunday. And if the young men of the present generation are to rival, I will not say their intellectual eminence, but at any rate their loftiness of character, they must be prepared to imitate their

self-sacrifice. It may perhaps help, in some small degree, to remove obstacles to the successful management of our Sunday Schools, if I notice shortly some difficulties which have come to my knowledge in connection with the relation between the clergyman, the superintendent, and the teachers.

The relation between the clergyman on the one hand, and the superintendent and teachers on the other, is determined for us in the Church of England by the deepest principle of our ecclesiastical polity. We believe that the authority to teach and minister in the Church comes from above, and not from below—from Christ, and not from those who believe in Christ. Our Lord said, “As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you;” and we believe that the principle implied in these words applies to every age of Christ’s Church. As Christ commissioned His Apostles, so did these commission their successors. No doubt the people have always had their office in the appointment of religious teachers. It has been theirs to take their part in the nomination of such teachers to their office, but their ordination, their solemn commissioning, has always belonged either to Apostles, or to those who derived their authority from them. In conformity with this principle, the cure of souls is solemnly committed by the bishop to the clergyman of a parish at his institution. His is the cure of souls, and none of the parishioners belonging to our Church can possess any of the offices essentially involved in that cure, except by

delegation from the incumbent. It follows, then, that both the superintendent and the teachers must receive their appointment from the clergyman. He will not indeed proceed to appoint a superintendent without consultation with the teachers, and without giving due weight to their recommendation; neither will he in like manner appoint a teacher without taking counsel with the superintendent, but in either case the authoritative appointment must be his. It will be for him, in my judgment, to show his appreciation of the solemn responsibility of this act of delegation, by admitting a superintendent or teacher to his office of feeding Christ's lambs, at a short religious service to be held either in the Church or school. This will be good for both of them, and for the school also, for it will remind clergyman and teacher of their joint brotherly responsibility, and will show to the children the deep sense which they both have of the sacredness of the duty which is thus imposed and received.

For the same reason, I think that after due consultation with the teachers, the clergyman should fix the lessons which are to be studied in the schools. He has the cure of souls, and it is for him in the last resort to determine what it is most for the children's spiritual edification that they should be taught. For this reason also, the clergyman should help the teachers in studying what they shall teach. He should be the leader of the weekly teachers' class for the study of the Sunday lesson. And if he con-

tinually reminds himself before God that he is ultimately responsible for feeding the lambs of his charge, he will take quite as much pains in preparing the teacher's lesson as in preparing the Sunday sermon. On our adequate appreciation of the importance of this duty, the success of the teachers' class will mainly depend. If we take pains to study carefully the meaning of the passage of Scripture under consideration ; if we arrange our materials in logical order ; if we bring out clearly the one or two great truths which they embody ; if we give adequate attention to the illustration and application of those truths, drawing out from the teachers by penetrating questions all which their Christian knowledge and experience can contribute to the enrichment of instruction, the lesson cannot fail to be interesting, and can hardly fail, I would add, to dispose in the most effectual way of those vain apologies by which teachers too often excuse their absence from the class.

Again, if the clergyman feels himself, as he should, directly responsible for the influence and Christian consistency of the Sunday School teachers, he should specially and regularly visit them at their homes. No good and solid work can be done in the Sunday School, no secure ground can be laid for the composing of quarrels and settlement of difficulties, without the maintenance of the feeling of brotherly sympathy and regard. And what can more directly or certainly tend to the maintenance and increase of this feeling, than the exhibition by the clergyman of that interest

in the home life and interests of the teachers which arises from regular visitation. Once more, the clergyman should be particularly careful to show consideration for the status and authority of the superintendent. Having chosen a teacher, he should leave it to the superintendent to determine the class which he can most advantageously teach. To the superintendent also should be left entirely the admission of scholars the enforcement of the rules of the school, the maintenance of discipline, and the resolution and determination of all differences between teachers and scholars. Difficulties may no doubt arise of so serious a character as to require reference to the clergyman, but our great aim should be to sustain the authority of the superintendent, and to determine difficult questions rather by means of him than without him. Above all, let the clergyman resolve never to set aside customary practices, or to introduce important changes into the school without considering the wishes and seeking the counsel of the superintendent and teachers. Nowhere in England are people so averse to arbitrary changes, or so jealous of autocratic action as in Lancashire ; and he who would secure the affectionate attachment and hearty co-operation of which its children are so capable, must resolve that he will work with them and by them, and never without or in spite of them.

One word I may say in conclusion about the helps which the clergy may advantageously recommend to their teachers. The teacher needs, in the first place,

a copy of the Revised English Version of the Holy Scriptures. This will almost stand to him, especially as regards the New Testament, in the place of accurate scholarship. With this version in his hand he may, where it is absolutely necessary to bring out the real meaning, correct the old version without the appearance either of pretence or of pedantry. For he will bring forward not his own authority, but that of the best Biblical scholars of our own generation. Then he should possess a Concordance, in order that he may be able, with the help of the clergyman, to make Holy Scripture explain itself. Further, in these days of enlarged geographical and archæological knowledge, he should have by his side a good Bible dictionary, such as that published by Dr. Smith. With these helps he will be almost independent of any other: but I need not say that it will be greatly to his advantage if he can purchase such works as Farrar's *Life and Work of St. Paul*, Thomson's *Land and the Book*, Ellicott's *Commentary for Schools*, Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, and *The Cambridge Bible for Schools*. Ignorance of his subject is always inexcusable in a teacher, and never more inexcusable than when the subject of his teaching is God's revealed message to His human children. Men are slack in this blessed work only when they suffer themselves to fall into practical unbelief. If we all felt habitually, as freshly and vividly as we feel that we must eat to live, that the Eternal Son of God came into our nature to deliver the message and

make the revelation contained in the New Testament; that this alone contains the whole truth about God's relation to us; that our whole moral and spiritual life depends, as it depends on nothing else, upon our believing reception of this message—how could we think any time too long, or any labour too great, to spend on the study and declaration of it?

My reverend brethren, we live in a time when many old customs are abandoned, and many old beliefs unsettled. And when men are well-nigh deafened by the din of doctrinal and critical controversies, which they only half understand, they are tempted to think that nothing is certain, that Christian faith is mere guesswork, and life an insoluble problem. You know that it is not so. I believe that the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith are more clearly verifiable now than they were in any former age since the days of the Apostles. For my own part, at any rate, I can say without doubt or reserve, that I believe in the Incarnation and Resurrection of the Son of God, and in all which is implied in those great facts, with a certainty more absolute than any sensible evidence could possibly furnish.

Let us all be determined to know what we can believe with all our heart, and then, staking life and everything else upon that, let us give our whole time and strength—the utmost energy of our will, intellect, and emotion—to the task of making the life around us the expression of our faith, the visible realization in time of the Divine ideal of our nature.

RECREATION

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I HAVE now completed my visitation of the twenty-six parishes of the Rural Deanery of Hulme. It is a district which contains some of our poorest and also some of our richest parishes. There are pleasant suburbs like Urmston, Stretford, Chorlton, Alexandra Park, and Whalley Range; and there are parishes which swarm with poor people, dwelling in low and squalid neighbourhoods like St. Philip's, St. Mark's, St. John's, St. George's, Hulme, and St. Luke's, Chorlton-on-Medlock. Some of these latter parishes are very dreary and destitute, and the clergy who are manfully striving to grapple with their manifold discouragements have my warmest sympathy. They are the kind of parishes which need and should receive a helping hand from their richer neighbours, and I confess that I was disappointed to find how little of this kind of assistance the poorest of them obtain. I would that my voice could be heard in their behalf wherever in this great city God has blessed His people with an abundance of worldly means. Rich men do not know what

they miss of the deepest blessing of the Gospel when they churlishly turn away from the opportunities of service which such parishes offer to them. Our greatest poet has reminded us that mercy is "twice blessed"; "it blesseth him that gives and him that takes." And a greater than Shakespeare has laid on us the command, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours, lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, because they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just."

I repeat these words to the clergy and laity of our richer parishes by way of remembrance; but to you, beloved brethren, to whom has been committed the great honour of doing the Church's most difficult work, I address far different language. Do your best, I say, with the means at your command. Never suffer yourselves to lose heart because of difficulty and failure; knowing that in the grace of your Divine Master, you possess an energy which shall never fail you, and which must, in the end, if you ply your task with believing zeal, overcome the opposing world.

I do not under-rate your difficulties, I know how hard it must be to see those of your people who have raised themselves a little above the level of the surrounding poverty, leaving your parishes for better and pleasanter neighbourhoods. You must

feel in such cases, as your Rural Dean once said to me, like the master of the lowest form in a public school, who continually loses his scholars when they begin to be interesting and helpful. Yes, but think how much the tone and character of a public school depend on the mental and moral training of the lowest form. Such as the boys are made there, they often continue to be through all their educational career.

Very much the same is your position in the great parochial system of the National Church. You have to deal not only with the rudest, but often, alas! with the most depraved elements of our civic life. Your parishes are the most fruitful seed-plots of vice, discontent, violence, and revolution. If, in England, we should ever be condemned to pass through such scenes of civic strife and bloodshed as have been witnessed in other countries, it is precisely in such parishes as yours that the agents of such mischief will be found. You keep the march of civilization, and are striving there on behalf of your brethren with the incipient forces of vice and disorder. And if order is to triumph over chaos; if right is to gain the mastery over wrong; if misery is to have a better aim than vengeance, and envy a better issue than the ruin of the commonwealth, it is mainly to your efforts that we shall all be indebted for our escape from the threatening evil. If, then, the post of danger is ever the post of honour, and if the heat of battle is the best test alike of the courage of the combatant, and the temper of his weapons, to

you should belong, above all others, not only the meed of praise, but also the recompense of faith.

I have given you during the last week such counsel as I could in your difficulties, and now suffer me to dwell for a few moments on what seems to me to be a special deficiency in some of the parishes of this Rural Deanery. The poorer your people are, the less is likely to be their mental energy. It follows, therefore, that in our poorest parishes special attention should be given to the provision of innocent recreation for our young people. Some of our brethren seem to me to assign a place of very inadequate importance to amusement. It is felt to be of value not so much in itself, as for some higher spiritual end which it may promote. I do not doubt that it is a very happy thing when a young man is led on from amusement to thought, and work, and worship, but still I hold that innocent recreation is good and necessary as an end in itself. When body and mind are tired with work, or jaded by worry and anxiety, they need the relaxation of amusement in order to regain their normal energy.

Those who deny this often do so, I believe, because of a mistaken view of the relation of God to nature and human life. It was the common idea of the eighteenth century (and is, I fear, the idea of too many still) that God dwelt in entire separation from the works of His hands. He made them, indeed, in the first instance, giving to matter its constitution, to force its energy, and to both the laws of their

existence and operation, but then He left the machine of natural existence to work on without His interference, or only with such occasional interference as might be required to repair calamities, or to advance the interests of His spiritual realm. God was conceived of as so entirely transcendent that He lived alone in a majestic isolation in some far-off heaven—far too holy and august to suffer contamination by contact with the impurity of creation. This theory had so much of truth that it marked very clearly the independent personality of the Most High, but then, in spite of its apparent reverence it did, in effect, banish God from His creation, and desecrate this latter by emptying it of everything Divine.

The first effective reaction against this unworthy idea of God and His works arose from the modern perception, that while man thought and felt and willed by means of his brain and nervous system, yet he was in himself more than body, and superior to body. It has been truly said that "if the brain of a living, thinking man were exposed to the scrutiny of an outside observer with absolutely perfect senses, all that he would or could possibly see would be molecular motions, physical and chemical." And yet we are confronted with the fact that the subject himself is conscious of none of these things. He knows by introspection that his being is in intense activity, but then he is conscious not of the motion of molecules, but of sensation, thought, emo-

tion, volition, &c. The changes taking place within him are not material but spiritual changes; nor can he by the utmost stretch of thought perceive any bond of union, any relation of dependence between the one and the other. There is a series of material changes, and there is a corresponding series of spiritual changes, but neither is nor can be derived from the other. They are the two sides of a life, far too wonderful and mysterious to admit of any simple explanation. We must admit, then, the reality of both sides, and be content to know that while we, the living men, are the conscious source of all the spiritual changes within us, yet so long as we are in the body those spiritual changes cannot take place without bodily instrumentality.

But now, when we have made this discovery, when we have found out that at the only point where we can get behind phenomena we have seen the spiritual working behind the material as its inner moving cause, are we not also impelled to conclude that if we could get behind material changes at other points we should find the psychical working there also, as that mysterious "thing in itself" about which philosophers have so vainly speculated? As soon as this idea is conceived, a thousand natural facts offer themselves to the observer in support of the truth of it. The little *arcella*, a mere spot of protoplasm, the strange water-lily which sacrifices its life for the propagation of its kind—these and a thousand other obscure existences, without even the rudimentary

beginnings of a nervous system, act as if they understood the profoundest natural laws, and were inspired with the noblest moral emotions. Where is the mind which directs them? Not demonstrably in themselves. No; it lies behind them. It is the Infinite mind which created and sustains them. So have we been driven on, by the mere progress of science and philosophy, to the magnificent and inspiring idea that "the phenomena of nature are nothing else than objectified modes of Divine thought; that the forces of nature are nothing else than different forms of one omnipresent Divine energy or will; and that the laws of nature are nothing else than the rules according to which that will operates,"—rules ordinarily unchangeable as that will is, but capable of modification according to the exigencies of a Divine government too vast for our comprehension. It is almost impossible to predict, or even to indicate, the far-reaching modifications of thought which must result from this vast and magnificent conception; but amongst them at least is this, an utter change in the puritanical, the almost gnostic ideas which good men have entertained as to the essential impurity of nature and human life. Both may have been spoiled or injured by finite action, but both, if they be indeed forms of the Divine thought and energy, must be essentially good. What then is natural, as distinguished from what is an aberration from the natural, is true, and holy, and Divine. There was no need for the gnostic

invention of a long series of intermediate agents to separate the Divine from the contaminating touch of the material; and there is as little need for the modern invention of the minor gods of gravity, heat, light, electricity, magnetism, &c., to do God's work for Him. These are in very truth only forms of the Divine energy, working according to the wise laws of an eternal order.

Nor need we be afraid that thus we are coming dangerously near to that Panthèism which sees no other gods than the minor deities or deity of materialistic science. God is more than His works, more than the very mightiest of them, man; and out of the fulness of His infinite resource worlds and universes may yet proceed, to which all that the past has known is only a rudimentary preparation. We have, in fact, the Divine guarantee of this hope in the wondrous breaking in upon the stately course of natural succession of the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, to restore, to elevate, to fashion anew that august moral order in which nature finds its climax and its crown. Am I saying anything but what Holy Scripture says in nobler and grander words? Did not the Lord Jesus assure us that it is God who feeds the raven and clothes the lily, and makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good? Was it not the deepest-hearted and best beloved of the disciples that called his Divine Master the Eternal Reason who made all things; who quickens them as their Life, and shines through them as their light; who is, in the human sphere

especially, the Light which lighteneth every man coming into the world? And are we not told once more by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, that "in God we live and move and have our being"? that it is God's will, in the fulness of the times, "to sum up all things in Christ—the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth"? and again, that "in Him (who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation) were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things have been created through Him and unto Him, and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist"?

There was a time when these words seemed to be mysterious almost to the point of incomprehensibility; but now, as we see, modern science and philosophy have put the deepest and grandest meaning into every one of them. Let us then take heed to the truths which they teach in considering the practically important question of amusement. If what I have said be true, then it is clear that we never see plainer proofs of the Divine benevolence than in the natural joy which all things have of life;—in the kitten dancing round its mother, in the lamb frisking in the fields, in the young child delighting in the sunshine, and the warm air, and the free play of its active limbs. Play is not only lawful in a little child, but necessary; the very means whereby it strengthens its bodily powers, the very

voice of that Divine joy in existence which God has implanted in its soul. And this is true, in its measure, of all young things of every age. Play is an instinct, a healthy inevitable instinct, a Divinely implanted and even holy instinct. It is not amusement which is evil, but vicious amusement—amusement which in its course excites impure or evil impulses ; which, through its accidental surroundings, brings the young into vicious company.

I say then, my reverend brethren, that it is part of our duty, as ministers of God, so to organize the people's amusements as to keep out of them these objectionable elements. If only we can supply our young people with such recreations as, while shutting out the abuses of drinking and gambling, shall stimulate no evil desire, and introduce no dangerous companions, we shall be doing God's work, even though we succeed in rendering no higher service to the young.

But this, I may remark, is well-nigh impossible. We may easily see that with advancing years amusement is only useful or even enjoyable when it serves the purpose of recreation ; when it re-creates the energy and elasticity which have been impaired by labour. But if indeed amusement have performed this its natural function, then the spirit will be all the more able and willing to give itself to higher mental and spiritual efforts, because the invitation to make them comes from one who has shown himself considerate of human needs, and appreciative of

those deep natural instincts which God has implanted in the breasts of the young.

Pray God, dear brethren, that more and more your souls may be the home and your lives the expression of that Divine enthusiasm of love, which, glowing at its brightest in the humanity of your Divine Redeemer, seeks no higher office and no better reward than the opportunity of serving men for their Saviour's sake ; so shall opposition vanish, and difficulties melt away, and your spiritual toils shall become, in spite of their inevitable accompaniments of care and weariness, a conscious and joyful sharing of the redeeming work of your Master.

INSTITUTES IN VILLAGES

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I HAVE now concluded my visitation of the twenty-nine parishes of the Leyland Rural Deanery. Those parishes comprise no more than four or five at the outside which can be called town parishes. The rest are villages, sometimes wholly pastoral or agricultural, but frequently combining with country pursuits some form of manufacturing industry. Generally, however, it may be said that the life of this Rural Deanery is village life, and that its spiritual needs and temptations are those which are naturally incident to that form of life. One exception however there is. Since many of these villages are at no great distance from the town of Chorley or Preston, they enjoy, in the form of technical schools, an advantage which is not within the reach of similar communities in the purely agricultural districts of England. It will be seen at once that the social condition of this district is somewhat peculiar, and that the measures therefore which should be adopted for its spiritual advance-

ment and welfare should be specially adapted to that condition.

In general, I am glad to say that I have found the clergy endeavouring to grapple energetically with the difficulties of the situation. Much good work is being done, but it is on the ordinary lines, and there is often too little evidence of elasticity and special adaptation in the methods adopted. For success in such work one needs a certain loving ingenuity, and a readiness to change and vary the mode of attack in order to meet the ever-varying moods and needs of those for whom we labour. While, then, thanking God for the many signs which I have discovered among the clergy of loving zeal and self-sacrificing labour, suffer me, my reverend brethren, to indicate certain points of weakness in our organization. You will not think, I am sure, that I assume the office of critic because I like it, or that in pointing out deficiencies I forget the good and faithful work that is being done. I speak because, as Bishop, it is my duty so to speak; because, as your brother in the ministry, I have had long experience of your trials and difficulties; and because I have an earnest desire that you should be more loved and respected by your people, and that your ministry should bring forth more abundant fruit to the glory of God, and the good of human souls.

First of all, then, I observe that out of twenty-nine parishes there are twenty-two which make no provision on the week-day evenings for the amuse-

ment and mental improvement of young men. I am not unmindful of the fact that classes for technical instruction have been formed in some of our villages. And I rejoice to know that many of those classes are now well attended. Nothing can be more useful to our young women than the instruction which they are receiving in such subjects as dressmaking and cooking. But if the classes for boys are to escape the fate of the Mechanics' Institutes, and of many of the evening classes started by the School Boards, we must be prepared to supplement the purely technical instruction furnished by the County Council with something which appeals to broader human interests. Nor must we allow ourselves to be discouraged by past failures. For every failure there is a cause, and I believe that the cause of many past failures was defective sympathy and encouragement on the part of the elder and better instructed members of the community. It is not enough to turn a number of great boys loose in a hired room with a few draught-boards and boxes of dominoes, telling them to amuse themselves as best they can. They are at an age when people are specially sensitive to the appearance of indifference and neglect. They know that while they are more than boys, they are not yet men; and so they are prone to suspect contempt even where it does not exist, and to resent it by every means in their power. To make even amusement agreeable to them there must be the evidence on the part of

their elders of real sympathy and consideration. A village club will never succeed unless some one or more of the members of the church, whom they look up to and respect, will make a point of attending its meetings, and of joining in the talk and games of the members. Such attendance may involve, no doubt, a certain element of self-sacrifice, but what good was ever done in this world without self-sacrifice?

I do not think, however, that we ought to be satisfied with a mere effort to amuse our young men, or even to give them instruction which shall be useful in their daily work. There is very little in village life to quicken the imagination, and to raise the tone of thought and feeling above the low level of animal wants and pleasures. What sight is more saddening than that of a great ring of young men blocking the path at the street corner, and out of mere mental vacancy trying to fill up the slow hours with horse-play, foul talk, or insolent behaviour to passers-by? Think how the mental and moral capacities of those youths are being wasted, how all that is highest and noblest in their nature is being corrupted, deteriorated, and broken down; what low, mean tastes they are cultivating, what rudeness of manner, what foulness of language, what intemperance in act and thought! Think how they are losing all modesty, self-restraint, and self-respect, mistaking vulgarity for simplicity, and impudence for independence, and sinking too often at last in mere

disgust at the insipidity of their life, into the wild and sensual excitement of the drunkard. Is there any exertion which we should hesitate to make in order to deliver these future fathers of our families from such utter degradation both of body and soul? But what can we do? you will no doubt ask me. How shall we find subjects of interest and teachers who will be willing and able to help us? I can only venture as an old and not unsuccessful teacher of young men, to make a few suggestions. First, endeavour to get a teacher who, deeply feeling the need, honour, and blessedness of such work, will take it as his one task, and devote all his strength and ability to its accomplishment. If you cannot at once get such a teacher, then give to the task as much of your own time and energy as you can spare, by way of example.

Nothing succeeds like success; and if you can only show that young men may be drawn to higher studies and kept interested in them, some other is sure to be stimulated to offer help and co-operation. Show that the work can be done, and labourers will not be lacking to do it.

But how, you may ask, are we to interest such young men as you have referred to? That, I confess, is not an easy task; but neither is it, I believe, an impossible one. I have always found that young men like the study of elocution. Teach them the conditions of appropriate utterance and gesture; select for recitation pieces containing the elements of

nervous and dramatic expression ; encourage them to criticize, with due consideration for the feelings of others, the manner in which recitations have been delivered ; and I believe you will find the means, not only of sustaining interest, but of refining the manners and improving the character. In order to promote accuracy of thought, establish a class for the definition of words. Select yourself, or encourage the members of the class to select, such words as shall introduce subjects of great and pressing interest : the relations of labour and capital, the nature and faculties of the human mind, even the fundamental problems of philosophy and religion. Get as many of your students as have sufficient mental energy to bring you written definitions of the words selected, and, as you criticize them, take occasion to point out how imperfect or mistaken definitions have introduced confusions of thought, and how clearness and precision in the use of words tends to soften controversy, to clear up misconception, to enlarge knowledge, and to strengthen intelligence. Such a class as that, genially conducted, will be found to have interest even for the dullest member of it.

Then, in order to show the dependence of the present on the past for instruction, stimulus, and guidance, establish a class for the study of the most interesting episodes of modern and ancient history. Take, for instance, the history of the British campaigns in Spain and Portugal, as told by Sir W. Napier. Prepare the way by a rapid sketch of the

past history of the Peninsula. Bring out the heroic and romantic elements of the Spanish character by the story of the Moorish wars. Show how Spanish tenacity and religiousness were abused to the aims of intolerance under Philip and the Inquisition; and how, consequently, in spite of the vast resources which Spain drew from the New World, she inevitably declined in intelligence, energy, and wealth. Describe, in fine, the situation when, with the organized force of the revolution at his command, Napoleon attempted to incorporate Spain in his vast dominions, showing how an attempt at unprincipled oppression revived all the dormant energies of the Spanish character. The British expeditions to Spain will then come as the explanation of a well-understood historical situation, and the stirring tableaux and heroic achievements of the great war which Sir W. Napier describes will then be followed, I venture to predict, with thrilling and breathless interest. Not less interest may be evoked by a similar treatment of Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic* and his *United Netherlands*; or of Prescott's *History of the Spanish Conquests in America*; illustrated, as these have recently been, by Fiske's account of the Pueblo Indians, and the Hibbert Lectures on Mexico. Again, if we shift the scene from modern times to the mystic and romantic borderland between history and tradition, we have the story of Egypt and Assyria, and Phœnicia, as this has been ingeniously recovered from the ancient scripts, and reported to us by modern

savants. In short, the materials for this kind of graphic narrative are well-nigh inexhaustible, and only require for their interesting development careful study and the enthusiasm of humanity.

Another weak point in the ecclesiastical organization of this Rural Deanery is the absence or loss of district visitors. There are no fewer than nineteen parishes out of twenty-nine which have no district visitors at all. It is of course to be admitted that district visitors are less needed among the small villages of this Deanery than in populous cities like Manchester and Salford. Still it cannot be truly said that the aid of district visitors can be safely dispensed with. For even where the population is smallest, it is generally scattered over a wide area, and a wide area always means imperfection in the means of social intercourse. It follows, of course, that the clergyman can never be sure that he knows from week to week what is happening in all parts of his parish. I would strongly advise you, therefore, my reverend brethren, to call out a body of sidesmen, or of lady helpers, or of both, who shall be drawn from all parts of the district, and shall undertake to tell you at once when any of your parishioners has special need of you by reason of sickness, trouble, or affliction. This informal kind of district visiting must be extremely valuable in such a neighbourhood as this, and will more than double the value of your pastoral ministrations.

Once more, I find that in this district no sufficient

organization exists for preventing the serious loss, which we all acknowledge and lament, of those who have been recently confirmed and admitted to the Lord's Table. Out of twenty-nine parishes there are only seven which have either communicants' class or union. This I believe to be the most grievous omission of all. I would not be understood to say that nothing is being done to keep our young communicants faithful and steadfast. I know that the clergy do much by direct personal conversation and influence. Many, again, of our young communicants are members of the excellent Bible classes which, in twenty-two of your parishes, are doing so good and useful a work. But still, it is a fact that nearly all the help which is offered to our young people, as communicants, is furnished by the clergy alone. And this is clearly wrong. The clergyman is not the Church, but only the Church's minister. The Church consists of all baptized people, and, in a very special sense, of those who realize their position as believers. But if the faithful are entitled to all the privileges, they are also clearly liable to all the duties of the members of Christ's Church. And of those duties, which can be more important than this: to give brotherly sympathy, guidance, and encouragement to those communicants who, by reason of their youth and inexperience, are in special danger from the temptations of the flesh and the world? I know that it is not easy for the elder to become friends of the younger. If we are to over-

come the shyness of the young ; if we are to break down those barriers of reserve and taciturnity by which the Englishman naturally guards his personal dignity and independence ; if, above all, we are to give full and unreserved expression to that Christian love which finds its chief delight in rendering service to those who need it, we must be prepared to undergo the inconveniences of labour and self-sacrifice. But can we be truly Christians while we hesitate to do this ? What is the true aim and purpose of the Christian calling ? Why did our Blessed Lord come into this world, take upon Him the limitations of our nature, to teach and labour, and suffer and die ? Why was the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost as our Teacher, Sanctifier, and Comforter ? Why was the Church established in the world as the home and refuge of the faithful ? Why, in fine do we claim and apprehend by faith that grace of God which was purchased for us by Christ, bestowed upon us by the Spirit, and brought near to us in the ordinances of the Church ? Was it only that we might know the meaning of these heavenly mysteries, or felicitate ourselves in the possession of them ? or was it that by means of the grace which they bring, we might live the life and do the work of our Divine Master ? Surely no one can be in any doubt about this matter. In him alone is the great purpose of redemption accomplished, who is trying to live as Christ lived, and to labour as Christ laboured. If, then, our Master came into the world

to save sinners from their sins;—to teach the ignorant, to support the weak, to cheer the sorrowing, to fill and brighten the lives of men by the light and love of God, we are only then true Christians when we are fellow-labourers with Him.

Now ask yourselves, my brethren, on whom was it that our Divine Master bestowed the most careful and unceasing labour? Was it not on the inner circle of the Apostles—on those who, believing on Him, stood nearest to His person, and had most sympathy with His purpose? Who, then, are they who stand nearest to us in the Church, and have most need of our aid? Are they not those who, being communicants, are exposed by their youth and inexperience to the greatest danger? If there be degrees in Christian responsibility, then surely our first duty is to those who have stepped out of the world to stand at our side; to those on whom, as a sad experience has shown us, the weight of temptation falls most heavily?

Let me then entreat all those of our lay brethren who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, to throw aside for His sake all those impediments of idleness, false shame, and self-distrust, which have hitherto stood in their way, and to help the clergy to stop that terrible leakage of young believers, which, more than anything else, has drained away the best life of the Church, and contributed to swell the tide of indifference, unbelief, and misery.

RATE AID TO VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

I HAVE now visited several of our Rural Deaneries, and I have found that in each there is some prominent feature which is peculiar to itself. I have been most struck here in Cheetham by the excellent teaching and orderly government of most of your primary schools. The children were for the most part bright and intelligent, the attention which they gave to my addresses was almost as close (I know no higher standard) as that which is given to sermons and speeches by the Lancashire Operative. It was a pleasure to speak to the children, and the most thoughtful of them showed incidentally an amount of general information which proved that they were careful and intelligent readers. Above all, the tone of the schools, that general average of habitual feeling which is so real, and so hard to define, was unusually high. The children were, as a rule, bright, genial, and courteous. Where, I asked myself, could the ministers of our Church find better subjects, or a grander opportunity, for the exercise of their ministerial influence? Often I talked in the various de-

partments until both body and voice were weary, and yet I do not know when I have spent more pleasant and useful hours. What an awful disability it is when the clergyman can no longer take his share in the religious teaching of the school, when he can no longer win the brotherly confidence of the teacher, or the affectionate regard of the children by his kind co-operation in the daily labours of education.

It is sometimes hard, I know, to provide the means of maintenance, and, still more, to raise the funds which are required to execute those extensive improvements and extensions on which the present Minister of Education so often insists. But is not anything better, my reverend brethren, than losing touch of the children, than handing them over to what may be hereafter—though thank God they are not now—alien and irreligious hands? Now you can teach them, as well by prayers as by instruction, the definite dogmatic truth about the great central fact of your faith—the Incarnation of our Blessed Lord—with all which that involves. Now you can gain from among them, not only with the consent, but with the hearty approval of their parents, the best and most hopeful of your candidates for Confirmation; and thereafter you can lead them by the brotherly sympathy, and advanced instructions of your communicants' guilds or unions, into the assured position of the firm and loving believer.

What can repay you for the loss of these privi-

leges and opportunities? How can you justify yourselves to that Master who bade you "feed His lambs," if you voluntarily abdicate this high and honourable office at the bidding of anything less than necessity?

I fear that many of you have to feel the strain of a very cruel and unfair competition with those who can use against you funds to which Churchmen are the most numerous contributors. I do not like to make accusations, but I fear that in some cases (with the best motives I doubt not) the Manchester School Board are not acting according to the spirit and the letter of the Act of 1870. Nothing could be clearer than Mr. Forster's language about the aim and intention of that Act. "We must take care," he said, "not to destroy in building up—not to destroy the existing system in introducing a new one." And again, "Our object is to complete the present voluntary system, to fill up gaps, sparing the public money where it can be done without, procuring as much as we can the assistance of parents, and welcoming, as much as we rightly can, the co-operation and aid of those benevolent men who desire to assist their neighbours."

In some cases which have come to my knowledge I fear that the Manchester School Board have been striving, not so much to fill up gaps in the existing system of education, as to extend its scope and raise its advantages at the cost of existing schools. I dare say that the School Board cannot always resist the

temptation to do this. They are often urged on by public opinion. And they may feel conscientiously bound to improve our primary education by all lawful means. Still, I do not think they should forget that Board Schools were intended to be supplementary to voluntary schools, and not substitutes for them; and that to destroy an efficient voluntary school by building a Board School in its immediate neighbourhood, or by unscrupulously outbidding it for public favour, is not only to incur oppressive expenditure, but also to depart from the distinct understanding upon which Board Schools were founded. I enter this plea in your behalf, my brethren, not because I want to find fault with the School Board, but because I am anxious that in the effort to keep your schools, you should have full advantage of that consideration which in 1870 was promised to you.

There is another article in the existing code which I have found to be working most inequitably. I mean the much and deservedly abused 17/6 limit. It has often been pointed out that the schools which suffer from this limitation are precisely those which should be most encouraged. They are the schools which are at once poor and good. If a school be poor and badly taught it will not earn 17/6 per child; if it be rich and well-taught, it will, by means of its ample subscriptions, earn more than 17/6 per child. Surely a regulation which fines a good school because of its poverty, is a very unjust one.

So far as the Government Grant is concerned, I believe that we should be better off if the Committee of Council adopted the wise and equitable suggestion of the Bishop of London. His Lordship suggested in his speech in the House of Lords on the New Education Code that, instead of giving a grant of 12/-, 14/-, or 15/6 a child, according to the report of the Inspector, the Department should fix a certain grant, and say that was the normal grant which would be paid for each child, unless in rare cases a shilling or two were struck off or added, to mark special cases of neglect or efficiency. With such a regulation, and payment for extra subjects according to scale without any arbitrary deduction, the task of school managers would be much easier than it is.

Still, I think that it would greatly help us to preserve our voluntary schools in efficiency if, in addition to the Government Grant, the School Board were permitted to help voluntary managers with a moderate sum out of the rates. Surely this cannot be deemed an inequitable proposal. Is it not just that the parents who pay the rates should gain some share of what they pay for the support of the schools to which they send their children? Of course such a measure might cause an increase in the existing school rates; but for all that, I cannot but think that in the end it might prove to be a wise economy. If the School Board had to assist schools which were not their own, they would see the necessity of becoming economical, and we should hear much less

than we do now of unnecessary or extravagant expenditure. If however, on the other hand, as some desire, the School Board should crush voluntary management out of existence, the present voluntary schools will pass into the hands of the School Board, and will be managed, to the great loss of the rate-payers, on the present scale of Board School expenditure.

It may perhaps be objected that popular supply means popular control. I admit that the principle is a sound one, and I only ask that it be applied with thoroughness. The churches have supplied the schools and apparatus, and in addition they are supplying no small share of the funds of maintenance. Let them then have a share in the management of their schools which shall correspond with their contributions. The State admitted this principle when, in return for grants in aid, it claimed the right of inspection, and the right to prescribe the dimensions and general arrangements of the school, as well as the curriculum of teaching. If the School Boards aid the voluntary schools with contributions from the rates, they will have a right to claim a fair share in the control and management of the schools. And this share the trustees and managers of voluntary schools have shown that they are ready to accord to them. They ask that the trustees of the buildings shall nominate one-third of the managers; that the parents who contribute so largely to the rates shall nominate another third; and that the

School Board, who represent the general body of the ratepayers, including many who are not parents of the children attending, shall nominate the remaining third. I believe this to be a thoroughly equitable proposition, one which is based on the understanding of 1870, that the voluntary schools shall be counted as part of the national system, and one, moreover, which closely follows the analogy of the Government claim of interference in consideration of aid furnished from the national taxes.

If such a scheme as this be adopted by the Legislature, it will bring to an end the present wasteful and vexatious competition between the Board and voluntary schools; it will combine all Englishmen in a strenuous endeavour to make primary education all which its best friends wish it to become; and it will prevent that opposition to the national system on the part of religious men, which is being felt so severely at the present time in France and the United States of America. It is, in fact, a system which is substantially the same as that which the Government of Belgium has been driven to adopt in order to conciliate the good-will of the more religious portion of their people.

It would have been affectation in me, while considering the condition of our schools, to neglect altogether the burning question of financial support, but at the same time I must say that I have far more interest in another aspect of this question—in the spirit and aim of the teaching.

Why, it is sometimes asked, are we making such efforts, and undergoing such sacrifices, in order to give a better education to our people? The answers to this question differ as widely as the views which men hold of the meaning and purpose of human life. Some consider the movement as altogether tending to make the majority of mankind dissatisfied with manual labour and the form of life which the gains of that labour can provide. We must not thoughtlessly sneer down this objection as though it were founded on no basis of fact. I believe myself that in many cases a too purely literary training has encouraged boys to overcrowd the callings which use the pen rather than the plough, the plane, the file or the mattock. That, however, is an evil which is produced not so much by education as by a faulty form of it. Very much more weight is possessed by another answer to this question—that since we have made the majority of our people the arbiters of the national destiny, we should try to enable them to understand the difficult political questions upon the solution of which that destiny depends. Nor is that other answer to this question without its importance, which sets forth the necessity of discovering and training those youths of exceptional ability, who will become the leaders of their fellows in the great social and political changes which are certainly imminent. Knowledge is always better than ignorance, and trained faculty than stolid stupidity when difficult and nationally momentous questions are

under discussion. I must confess, however, that I have far less sympathy with the common idea that education is chiefly valuable as enabling individuals to improve their social position. It matters very little in my opinion what social position a man may occupy, if only he finds in it the means of exercising his faculties and rendering service to his kind. Few people would consider the social condition of a carpenter a very exalted one—and yet no other was that of Him whom hundreds of millions of the most cultivated races in the world love and adore as their noblest example and greatest benefactor. And surely this very fact should be sufficient in itself to direct our thoughts into a worthier channel when considering what is the chief benefit of education—Man is a spirit, made in the image of his Heavenly Father, and the very highest result which can be achieved by human effort is to make him wise and good. If men will introduce the question of utility, let them ask themselves which is the highest utility, to make the man much, or his possessions much? to make politicians crafty or to make them honest and truth-loving? to make nations wealthy and numerous, or to make them righteous and pure? Surely there can be no doubt as to the true answers to these questions.

Let us then take care that it be the first and principal aim of our education to improve the mind and to purify the hearts of the children entrusted to our care. Let us try to induce our teachers to aim

at this, and not at the mere earning of grants. If the total omission of a necessary subject like geography would enable the school to earn more money, let us prefer the good of the children to the amount of our possible gains. Yea, let us not fail to point out the fact that thorough and adequate teaching, by sharpening the children's intelligence, will in the long run earn a larger sum than a narrow system of special and more monotonous training. Only we must remember that if we adopt the broader and better method only for what we can get by it, we shall be likely to forsake it at the first delusive appearance of failure. Get the right aim, I say, and go straight for it whatever comes. That aim is to make the children wise and good, to enlarge and broaden their intelligence, to stimulate and call out their best affections, to lift them above all mean and selfish desires for mere personal gain and pleasure; and to set clearly before their eyes that lofty and beautiful ideal of loving service which was perfectly realized by the Lord Jesus Christ, and which can make them, so far as in Christ's strength they realize it, noble men, useful citizens, and happy inheritors of the Kingdom of God.

Stand before the children, my beloved brethren, as I now stand daily before them; make them think; make them feel; and then as you look into their eyes, now kindling with the light of intelligence, and now deepening with the softening glow of kindly sym-

pathy, you will come to love them as if they were your own, and you will resolve to work for them, in the school and out of it, as the dear objects of your Saviour's interest, as the tender lambs which He has solemnly committed to your care.

EVILS AND THEIR REMEDY

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

THE Rural Deanery of Ardwick is one of the largest both in area and number of churches of any of our town divisions. During the last twelve days I have had the opportunity of seeing each of its thirty-one parishes with my own eyes, of visiting its churches, schools, mission halls, and club buildings, and of talking with its clergy and laity at some length upon their special needs, hopes, and discouragements. On the whole, I have been greatly cheered by what I have seen. Of course some of the parishes are far more prosperous and well-managed than others; but speaking generally, I can say that the Church in this Rural Deanery is better organized than I had been led to expect, and is doing a greater and more spiritual work than any one could discover from mere printed returns.

The work in your Rural Deanery is of a very diversified kind. Some parishes are rich, others are poor. Some are populous, others are sparsely inhabited. Some are the seats of flourishing or offensive industries; others are pleasant suburban

retreats buried at this season of the year in leafy plantations. It follows, of course, that the methods of work and organization must be as various as the surrounding circumstances, and that it will not be possible for me to lay down a general plan which shall be universally applicable. One thing however there is which is the same everywhere, that human nature to which in all our ministrations we must appeal. And furthermore, there is one unhappy peculiarity in that nature, which, however we may be tempted to ignore it, is never absent: I mean our inherited tendency to do wrong. We are by nature spiritually blind and indolent, prone to ignore God and eternity and the Divine life; prone to live for earthly pleasure, and to spend our efforts in the accumulation of earthly gain. This is true of all classes of men, whether they be rich or poor, cultured or ignorant. It frequently shows itself most clearly, however, in those classes which have the fewest social and educational advantages. It is the fashion, I know, in this democratic age to ignore, or if necessary to contradict, this unpleasant and humiliating fact. It is quietly assumed, for instance, in certain quarters that if the opportunity of work be given to men, they will eagerly embrace and diligently improve it; that if a regular reward be paid for their labour, they will conscientiously endeavour to earn it, that if they are given the absolute control of their own bodies and minds, they will use their freedom in the effort to secure

their own highest well-being; that if they are warned of the degrading and impoverishing character of certain vices, they will do their best to avoid such vices. In a word, it is considered that just as they are, without any change, men have the power to become anything they please. They have only to will and to be, only to resolve and to do, only to determine and to avoid. Now every one of these assumptions is false, and has been historically proved to be so a hundred times. Why have so many of the experiments of well-meaning Socialists failed? What was the hidden element in the problem which they neglected? What was the rock on which their daring enterprises were broken in pieces? It was just this—they ignored the fact of human depravity; they assumed, contrary to the fact, that men as they are were capable of continuously self-denying service. Do not think that I am insensible to the noble love of man which inspired their undertakings, or that I think such experiments should necessarily cease because of their past failure. No, I do not blame such enthusiasts for trying by any means within their reach to diminish the evils of poverty, ignorance, and vice. I only desire them to recognize the deepest facts of our life, and to adapt their methods of reform to the actual needs and capacities of our race. As all action depends on the will, it is obvious that before we endeavour to change men's life and circumstances we must ask ourselves this question: Is the will of man ab-

solutely free to select that course which reason and conscience declare to be expedient and right? And to ask that question thoughtfully is to answer it. For nothing can be more obvious than that naturally we have no such freedom. We see every day that some of the grandest lives are spoiled by indulgence in some vice which is clearly perceived to be a vice, and to involve disgrace and ruin. And if this be true of men of great natural goodness and force of character; much more is it so in the case of ordinary people. Of the thousands of drunkards among us, there are very few who do not know that drunkenness is a criminal folly, and who do not at times hate the vice which enslaves them. The will is good, but it is powerless to restrain the lawless appetite. "When I would do good," the man is constrained to say, "evil is present with me." "The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak."

What we need then, first of all, is manifestly reinforcement of the will—some spiritual power, not our own, which can enable us to restrain the imperious impulses of appetite, and to live as in our better moments we desire to live. Where then can we find such a power? Where is it even offered to us but in the gospel of the grace of God? We say, then, to those who would make churches of trades unions, and a gospel of economic organizations, and of schemes for the equal division of products—you must change men's hearts before you can change their lives. So long as men are selfish and seek their pleasure in

sensual enjoyments, no mere social or political changes can make them prosperous and contented. Men were not created merely for enjoyment, but for goodness; not merely to obtain a full share of the food of the senses, but to become in life and character righteous and loving like their Heavenly Father. Seek happiness as the end of life, and you shall miss it; seek holiness and you shall gain happiness unsought. For the worth of a man's life depends not upon what he has, but upon what he is; not upon his earthly possessions, but upon his moral and spiritual character.

I have dwelt at some length upon this subject, because, my reverend brethren, I believe that our success in our work will depend largely upon the firmness with which we grasp these two truths: first, the hereditary proneness of man to evil, and secondly, the power of Christ alone to deliver us from that proneness. If we keep these truths continually before our eyes, we shall be in no danger, either of relaxing our efforts, or of neglecting any of the souls committed to our care. Are they all naturally inclined to idleness, greed, improvidence, intemperance, impurity, or impatience of moral control?—then we know that if we do nothing, if we merely neglect them, or any class among them, they will surely and fatally degenerate. If we would save them, we must spare no effort, no self-sacrifice, to bring them within the attractive influence of the cross, within reach of the regenerating and sanctifying touch of Christ's life.

We must be instant in season and out of season, and be prepared to exhaust all the resources of a holy ingenuity in the effort to meet the wants of each class of our people. The work of the faithful parish priest is never ended. He has vowed himself to the service of Christ, and of "those whom Christ died to save," and he must never cease to think, and plan, and labour, so as to be ready with new schemes and workers to meet the continually changing needs and temptations of his people. They need direct instruction ; and he must provide for them services, lectures, Bible classes, communicants' classes, lantern lectures, and all those forms of graded or diversified teaching which experience has approved. They need sympathy, comfort and advice in their sorrows and perplexities, and the clergyman should seek to call out to their aid the brotherly loving kindness of the faithful. I am glad to say that in several parishes of this Rural Deanery, where district visitors were either wholly wanting or sadly insufficient, the late Manchester and Salford Mission has stimulated many to offer themselves for this good work. Never did they take a step more fraught with blessings to themselves. For if a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses ; if the opportunity of honouring Christ by loving service to His brethren be the richest reward of human effort ; if Christian men have been called into communion with the Lord, not merely that they might hear sermons, but that they might labour and suffer for men, as Christ

laboured and suffered ; then it is certain that through such loving self-sacrifice they will find the shortest way to " the peace which passeth understanding."

But again, we must not forget that in a refined taste and a cultured understanding we shall find a most important auxiliary to the spiritual work of the Church. If our holy religion be remarkable for " its sweet reasonableness," for the depth of its spiritual teaching, and the rational persuasiveness of its loving appeals, then it is certain that in a strengthened and refined understanding we have one of the best and surest of our allies. For this reason it is most important to found or encourage educational institutes, literary societies, dramatic clubs, and those other forms of popular and agreeable instruction which I am glad to say I have found in not a few of your parishes.

For the young increased facilities of this kind are being provided in several parishes by the erection or enlargement of primary schools. Four new schools have been recently erected, while three others have been improved or enlarged ; and in addition to these two new Sunday Schools and two Mission Rooms have been provided and opened. I am sorry to say that new schools are urgently needed in three parishes, and the addition of an Infant School in another ; while in two more, important improvements have been ordered by the Education Department. Deficiencies like these, which cannot be long neglected without serious injury to the Church and

her children, cry aloud for the exercise of generous self-sacrifice on the part of the wealthier members of our Church.

Once again, as there are many of our young men who are not of a thoughtful nature, and who, when tired by hard manual labour, cannot apply themselves to intellectual pursuits, it is desirable, wherever possible, to furnish such with the means of innocent amusement.

If they are thus kept away from undesirable places and companions, and brought into pleasant social intercourse with pious and genial friends, they will be delivered from some of the most fatal temptations which at their age beset their path. Remember the great and terrible truth which I have endeavoured to impress upon you, the fatal tendency of human nature to evil, and you will be convinced that by merely keeping our young men from the reach of morally deteriorating influences, you have done them a real and most valuable service.

I am sorry to say that among the deteriorating influences in this Rural Deanery, we must number not only badly-conducted public-houses, but also, too commonly, social and political clubs. The evidence is overwhelming that many so-called political clubs are little better than unlicensed and uncontrolled taverns, in one at least of which men spend their Sunday mornings in drinking, and in too many of which they are encouraged to continue their evening carouses after they have been turned out

of the licensed houses. The time has clearly come when these clubs should be made subject to legal restraint and regulation, and I trust that such regulations as those contained in the clauses of the Bishop of London's Licensing Bill, which propose to effect this purpose, will receive the sanction of the Legislature.

Some of the larger parishes in this Rural Deanery stand sorely in need of Mission Rooms. Portions of those parishes are so far from the church that many of the parishioners are deterred from attendance at public worship; while not a few of the poorer people complain that they are ashamed to mingle with well-dressed people in their working clothes. We may have very little sympathy with such excuses, but if, as a matter of fact, they point to real hindrances, we should clearly do what in us lies to remove the occasion of them. If some of our rich people would only build and equip such humble temples, I feel sure that pious and zealous laymen would be found to conduct the services, and that ere long the leaven of Christian life and principle would be spread among populations which are now entirely out of its reach.

Do not think, my brethren, that I am insensible to the zealous and sometimes noble efforts which are being made by obscure clergymen and laymen, whose work is visible to no eye but God's. There is nothing for which I am more thankful than for the opportunity which is furnished to me by my present visitation of becoming acquainted with such work.

But, brethren beloved, I am anxious that your work should be yet worthier of your grand vocation, that it should make you yet dearer to the heart of your Divine Master, and yet more beloved by those whom He has sent you to serve. I do not dictate, I only suggest and entreat, as one who knows too well the frailty of our human weakness, the slackness of our half-believing love, and the dark despondency of our hours of discouragement and failure. May the dear Lord, who, in spite of all those discouragements we try in our feeble measure to serve, multiply upon you His mercies, fill you with the enthusiasm of His own redeeming purpose, stay you with His Almighty arm, and in His own good time crown you with a full measure of success.

A LIVING WAGE

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

THERE are few amongst us, I suppose, who will not be ready to admit that the Labour Question has become the burning question of our own day. You in Oldham have a special reason to know that. Mainly in consequence of the recent coal strike, the average profits obtained by some hundred companies in your town was *nil*. Of course if such disturbances as these become normal, and such losses common, capital will either desert the cotton industry altogether, or seek some other and more favourable sphere than England as the scene of its operations. Is it likely then that such disturbances will be frequent? The answer to this question depends largely on the theory which will direct in future the action of wage-earners. And that theory is formulated for us in the popular demand for “a living wage.”

Now let us ask, in the first place, what that demand means? It has been loosely defined as “the wage on which working men could live in decent comfort.” This is a definition so vague as to be practically useless. It refers to a purely sub-

jective standard, and of course it may vary indefinitely as the definition of "a competence" may, with the changing ideas and circumstances of the working classes. Robert Owen's definition of the "standard of wage" may seem at first sight to be slightly less vague and fugitive. It was to be determined, according to him, by "the personal expenditure needful to efficient citizenship." But who is to determine what is efficient citizenship, or what is the wage which will produce such citizenship?

Professor Cunningham approaches more nearly to a comprehensible explanation. The living wage, he says, is "the ordinary rate of wage which the ordinary workman has earned in ordinary times," and he thinks that "the books of any firm ought to show the rate actually paid per hour to the ordinary man in ordinary times." There is clearly still room for discussion as to the class of workers who shall be called "ordinary men," and as to the particular intervals which shall be deemed "ordinary times." But still there is a definiteness in this definition which is not presented by either of the former.

The fundamental claim which is embodied in these definitions seems to be this: that wages shall be determined rather by the wants of the worker than by the gain of the trader. Is this claim then, let us ask, in accordance with Christian principles? Certainly the Gospel teaches us that the workman

is worth more than any gain which can be made out of his work ; that the man is more than any wealth which may be gained by his labour. " What shall it profit a man," said our Divine Master, " if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? " Now, if one man be of more intrinsic value to himself than the whole world, it follows that to gain wealth by the deterioration of man, by the wasting of his physical strength, the stunting of his mental growth, and the breaking down of his moral energy, is criminal and infamous. If man, the immortal, the son of God, and the brother of Christ, be used as a mere organic machine for the creation of wealth, by the degradation of his manhood, then a crime is committed against Him who made him in His own image to reflect His own perfections. Man first, then, and wealth afterwards ; this is clearly the order of the Divine purpose, and should be that of the aim of every one who employs human labour for gain. Every such employer is bound to say to himself, not how can I get the greatest possible profit out of my business ? but how can I so order the labour and the payment of all my workpeople as to give them the largest possible opportunity of living a healthy, intelligent, and noble human life ?

But now, on the other hand, the same Christian truth has its obvious application to the labourer. If to him his manhood is more than his gain, he should seek an adequate remuneration for his toil, not in order to spend idle days or to indulge

vicious appetites, but only to obtain for himself and his family the means and opportunity of a happy and worthy human existence. And let it be observed that to such an existence plain and simple living is just as powerful an auxiliary as high thinking. "Having food and raiment," said a great Apostle, "let us be therewith content." You need not be anxious, said our great Master, about food and raiment. He who feeds the ravens and clothes the lily will not forget you. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Is it of no significance in this connection that He who, by the confession of all, whether sceptics or believers, was the greatest and best of the Sons of men, lived and worked as a carpenter? Stand for an hour before Holman Hunt's great picture, *The Shadow of the Cross*, mark the attitude and expression of the Divine Workman as he relaxes the tired and stiffened muscles, with all the signs of His hard and humble labour around Him. Is anything spared there of what some people think the meanness and disability of manual toil? And yet can you not see at a glance how the hard, honest service of the craftsman did but make Him fitter for the mighty spiritual work which He was to do? Money should no more be the first consideration of the poor man than it is of the rich. If, on the one hand, the man to whom much has been given is bound, as God's steward, to live plainly and simply, and to devote his means to the service of the

brethren, not less, on the other hand, is the poor man bound to think first of his moral and spiritual life, and only of his wages as a means for the improvement of this. I will not say that if both the parties in our industrial wars were guided by such sentiments, no differences could ever arise between them; but I am bold to believe and to affirm that those differences would never lead to wasting conflicts and bitter exasperation. I have set before you, however, a very lofty ideal, and every practical man is aware that the realization of such ideals must in this very imperfect world be a slow and gradual process. Thus, in endeavouring to approximate to a realization of the Christian ideal of the relation between capitalist and labourer, we shall find ourselves confronted by at least three formidable difficulties, two of them economic and one moral.

However willing we may be to secure to the agricultural labourer such wages as shall provide for him the comforts and conveniences of life, we shall find ourselves limited in our endeavour, in such a country as England, by the productiveness of the worst soils in cultivation. "Roughly speaking," says Mr. Mallock, "land which pays a rent equal to £1, or less than £1, an acre, embraces one-half the cultivated surface of Great Britain and Ireland." Now, suppose that by some just method of compensation all the occupiers of this land could be freed from the payment of rent, and that one man with his family could cultivate sixteen acres—a very large

assumption—how much, on the average, would these peasant-proprietors earn? Probably, with free trade in corn, not more than £3 an acre; on the worst lands, possibly much less. On this hypothesis, therefore, the owner-cultivators of half the land in England could not earn more than £48 a year. This illustration is, I know, a rough one. It may involve mistakes. Instead of £50 a year, the cultivator of these lands may be able to earn £60 a year. But whatever the sum may be, the living wage cannot rise above it. For if this sum be not considered a living wage, what will have to be done? It is supposed that you have made an equitable distribution of the remaining land of the country, in quantities proportioned to its productiveness. The only alternative then which remains, if the sum earned be not deemed a living wage, is to let half the land of England go out of cultivation, and to transfer the labourers to more lucrative employments. There are just a few heroic theorists, men like the gentleman who affirmed the other day, “if the coal is not worth a living wage it is not worth getting,” who would be ready to accept this alternative. We must have, he would say, a living wage. If the land will not provide what we think a living wage, let it go out of cultivation. There may be a very few, perhaps, who would be willing to pay for their logical consistency a price as disastrous as that. But nine men out of ten would see at once that it meant nothing else than national ruin. There are

now 29,000,000 people in England and Wales. The land of these countries does not, and cannot be made to, provide food for half that number. If, then, the other half is to be fed, it must be from the fields of other lands. Is not such a state of things full of dangers of all kinds? Can it be for the physical or moral good of a nation that a majority of its people be excluded from the healthy pursuits of agriculture? Can it conduce to national independence and security that the very continued existence of the greater part of its inhabitants may be compromised by the accidents of war, or a change in the currents of trade? Can we think, again, without dismay of the light thrown by the past on our probable future? In less than a century our population has more than trebled. What, then, will be our position if in the next century we progress at the same rate? That would give us in a hundred years, 87,000,000 people in England and Wales alone. Long before any such result has been reached we shall most surely feel the terrible pressure of commercial and agricultural distress. Is this a time then, with such surroundings and such prospects, to let land go out of cultivation in England? If not, then it may well be that we shall be obliged to consider some such sum as I have indicated a living wage for agricultural labourers. I have acknowledged that the illustration may involve errors of detail. One thing, however, I believe that it puts beyond doubt that there is an objective limit, and that not a very high one,

to the possible advance of the labourer's wages. His mere claim to have "a living wage" cannot extend that limit. He must be content with what he can get, and make it "a living wage," as I believe that he very well can do, if his desire is, not for the satisfaction of sensual pleasure, but for the elevation of life and character.

The observations which I have made on the objective limit of the agricultural labourer's possible wage, suggests the second economic difficulty to which I referred. It is this: that the possible increase of an artisan's wages is limited by the competition of foreign rivals. I know that there are some people who sneer at this statement, and are always ready to speak lightly of what they call "the bogey of foreign competition." It will be found, I fear, before very long that foreign competition is no mere bogey but a solid and disquieting fact. It is stated by Mr. Brooks, though he does not give his authority, that "in France and Germany textile factories are running 28 per cent. longer time than our own, and machine factories 15 per cent. longer; in Austria the corresponding figures are 18 and 27 per cent. longer; in Russia 28 to 50 per cent., and 38 per cent.; in Switzerland 18 and 27 per cent.; in Belgium 28 and 20 per cent.; in Italy 23 to 60 and 38 per cent., and so on. Now, it may be that in England we make up, to some extent, in efficiency of labour for our shorter hours. But there is a limit to this possibility, and that this limit has in

some industries been reached and passed is made evident by such a fact as this: that in cutlery and steel the Germans are rapidly displacing the products of British industry, even in our own dependency India. Some have thought to escape the pressure of this limiting condition of foreign competition by the astounding pretension that England can live without foreign trade. Mr. Tom Mann is reported to have said before the Labour Commission in 1892 that "he was not desirous of seeing England keep the largest possible proportion of the world's trade. He was quite prepared to see Frenchmen, Germans, Americans, and the people of every other country producing what they required for their own sustenance and development, and his own country doing the same, and not more than that." Can it be possible that this witness had asked himself how eighty millions of people could be supported by English trade alone, when the products of her land would not feed more than twelve or thirteen millions? Let any sensible man ask himself what would be the effect on Lancashire of the present determination of the rulers of India to put a heavy tax on cotton goods from England, in favour of the great mills in Bombay and elsewhere? But what would this be to the loss of all our foreign markets? That would mean nothing less than the stoppage of nearly all our principal industries, and the ruin of those engaged in them.

It is clear, then, that if we are to gain a decent subsistence in the manufacturing districts of England,

we must keep our foreign markets, and that to keep these we must be able to meet successfully the opposition of foreign competitors. If, then, we fix what we deem "a living wage" so high, that it not only swallows up profits, but also makes our goods dearer than those of our foreign competitors, we shall lose our trade. "The living wage," then, cannot be independent of foreign competition. It will find here a real objective limitation, and no desire for the welfare of our fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians can, in the present state of things, exempt it from the operation of that condition.

We shall find here also, unless I am mistaken, the true answer to the question, why all wages cannot be fixed by custom. It may be possible and expedient, no doubt, to fix the rewards of some callings by this rule. It is possible and expedient, for instance, to fix the stipends of our judges in this way. It is expedient so to do; for if the salaries of the judges be not fixed at a liberal rate, we shall not be able, at our present stage of ethical attainment, either to induce barristers of the highest ability to accept the office, or to put them out of the reach of bribery and corruption. Now what class would be the losers if our judges were not men of the highest ability, and inaccessible to bribes? Not the wealthy, who could hire the services of skilled lawyers, or, if necessary, offer bribes, but the poor, who could do neither. It is expedient, therefore, that the stipends of our judges should be fixed by custom. It is also possible.

English judges are not subject to the competition of foreign lawyers. Their calling is national, not international. This, however, as I have shown, cannot be the case in respect to our main staple industries, such as those of the iron and textile manufactures. These must be ready to meet a severe international competition, and so cannot be fixed by any purely national agreement or custom.

I may be told, perhaps, by some that they fully recognize the fact that wages are necessarily subject to the two limiting conditions which have been mentioned, and that their complaint is not of what cannot be helped, but of what can:—not of any limitation of the value of products, but only of an unfair and unchristian distribution of them. The products of manufacturing industry are divided between two classes, the capitalists and the labourers, and the former, it is alleged, get more than their share in the form of profits. No doubt the capitalist has a claim to profit on account of the abstinence which enabled him to provide beforehand a wages fund; on account of the risk to which he must submit of losing the result of his savings; and frequently also on account of the skill, labour, and anxiety involved in the management of his business. But it is complained he wants more than a just remuneration for the creation, employment, and risk of his capital. He thinks nothing of the reasonable needs and claims of his workmen. He is ever ready to beat them down, to sweat them, and to wring the last possible farthing

out of their ignorance and necessities. I believe this complaint to be immensely exaggerated. Nay more, I believe that whatever might be the will of capitalists they have no longer the power to do any of these things. I have the best reason for believing that in all our principal industries the margin of profit is a very narrow one, hardly sufficient in many cases to furnish an adequate inducement to the capitalist to continue his labours.

But whatever may be the actual state of the facts, this is certain—that workmen have the remedy in their own hands. By companies and by private individuals they are frequently offered the privilege of sharing profits—a privilege which involves a full revelation to them of the actual amount of such profits. Nay, if they will it, by investing their savings in co-operative companies, in which they themselves are the employers, they can secure the whole of the products of their industry for themselves, both the profit of capital and the wages of labour.

Many experiments of this latter kind have been made, but, as Miss Beatrice Potter has shown, they have not been generally as successful as their best friends could wish. Co-operative distribution indeed, and co-operative production for the members of distributive unions, have been so successful that the modern co-operative movement can boast of “its million members, its thirty-six millions of annual trade, its three millions of yearly profits, and its twelve millions of accumulated capital.” This is a

great achievement; nor have the indirect consequences of this movement been less beneficial to workmen than its more direct results. These have been summarised by Miss Potter (now, I believe, Mrs. Sidney Webb) as follows :—First, “the commercial and technical knowledge gained by astute Trade Unionists,” by the open publication of the profit and loss accounts of various concerns. Secondly, the reduction of the salaries of managers from several thousands to from two to four hundred a year. Thirdly, the reduction of average profits all round to five per cent. on capital.

Still it cannot be disguised that pure co-operative production, that is to say, production by workmen who own the capital with which they trade, has had a very limited success indeed. Many such institutions have turned into mere profit-making companies, and though it cannot be said that these deteriorated co-operative syndicates are without their value, still, for various reasons, productive co-operation has not so far achieved the declared aim of its creators. What have been the causes of failure? Mrs. Webb enumerates three. First, want of sufficient capital to carry on any of the large staple trades of the country. Secondly, lack of custom owing to the absolute ignorance displayed by mechanics of all commercial matters; and owing to their incapacity to adapt their productions to existing demand. Thirdly and principally, a narrow-minded selfishness among the labourers which makes them incapable of working together or of giving due consideration to

the claims and authority of the manager whom they have chosen.

In these last words we have an exact description of the third difficulty—the moral difficulty—with which, as I said at the outset, any effort to settle the true relation between capital and labour is confronted. Professor Jevons has truly said, “no co-operative undertaking can possibly succeed unless the functions of managers and operatives are kept distinct, and shareholders working as operatives are prepared to submit to a manager who is their servant.” This self-subordination involves, on the part of the workers, a moral effort quite as arduous as that which must be made by the capitalist before he can put the interest of his workmen above his own. And it is an effort of which working men seem so far to have been incapable. Robert Owen’s efforts failed because he assumed that the power of unselfish service would show itself among artizans as soon as it was called upon. The attempts of the Christian Socialists, led by Mr. Maurice, came to nothing for the same reason. In the only report which the Council of Promoters issued, before they gave up their task in despair, we find the following words: “Each one of these associations had quarrelled with and turned out its original manager within six months. Two struggled on to the beginning of the year, never paying their way, and continually quarrelling. . . . These small associations will compete with and ruin one another, unless working men will look forward

and take a broader and more Christian view of their work."

I believe that this moral difficulty is the greatest of all. Until both labourers and capitalists become more Christian in spirit, the one being ready to give their best efforts for the service of their brethren, and to submit ungrudgingly to the necessary laws of industrial association, and the other being willing to accept as their best reward the power of making their work-people good and happy, no final solution will be reached of this formidable labour difficulty. It is not this or the other form of organization that is needed, but a Christian spirit in all concerned. Suppose, for instance, that the State Socialists had attained their desire, making the State the sole capitalist and director of labour; how would they deal with the vast mass of men who, in the present state of public morality, are disposed to do as little and enjoy as much as possible? With the million thrifty co-operators their task might not be so difficult. Here they would be confronted chiefly by the arduousness of the task of making a central official management of our great iron and textile industries successful, and by the difficulty of reconciling men of vigorous individuality to an inevitable abridgment of liberty and power of progress. But we all know that among the existing European populations there are vast numbers who are naturally idle and vicious, who long for State Socialism mainly that they may escape hard work and obtain a cheap indulgence of

vicious appetite. How are these to be forced to work and to practise self-restraint? If the State is to be the only capitalist having continually to renew capital from the products of labour, it must compel the idle and vicious to toil. How then can it do this? A mere appeal to moral energy which does not exist, will be as certainly useless as Robert Owen found it. Shall, then, the idle and vicious be compelled, as the Egyptians say, "to eat stick"? But who is to inflict the punishment when the majority are defaulters, and when even the minority shrink with modern sensibility from inflicting corporal chastisement? I do not say that the world may not one day be ready for a Socialist organization of labour, but I do say that to-day it could not bear it. The necessary precedent condition of such an organization is an increase of Christian feeling and principle, the deepening in some, and the creation in more, of a readiness to submit to toil and restriction in order to glorify God in the service of His human children.

One other word I would say on this subject by way of caution. Remember, that if we once make the experiment of State Socialism there can be no turning back. Schemes of profit-sharing and productive co-operation may fail, without greatly disturbing the public prosperity. But State Socialism means the total destruction of private capital. If, therefore, it fails, it fails among a community of paupers, who without the means of a recovery must suffer all the horrors of famine, conflict, and public bankruptcy.

With an issue before us so tremendous, the greatest enthusiast among us may well pause before shooting Niagara, and taking all the risks of the operation.

Trade Unionists generally distrust all schemes for economical re-organization, whether they take the form of profit-sharing, co-operative production, or State Socialism. They prefer that the employer, whether an individual or a company, shall still perform his well-known functions of providing and risking capital, and of managing the business of which he is the head. Certainly this plan avoids many obvious difficulties and proved causes of failure. The workers then demand from the employer thrift to produce capital, enterprise to risk it, and skill, knowledge, and experience to direct its employment. But then, as Mrs. Webb says, "Trades Unionism is an unconscious but highly successful effort to divert the pressure of competition from the wages of labour, and to fasten its grip on the brains or the capital of the employer." Now so long as Trades Unionism abstains from brutal and violent attempts to interfere with the freedom of the labourer, so long as it uses no means but persuasion and the power of united action, I do not say that its aim is fundamentally unjustifiable. But it must remember two things. First, that for his services the capitalist deserves a reasonable return; and secondly, that if its pressure be selfishly and remorselessly applied it may easily defeat its own ends. There is a degree of risk and loss which will make it necessary for the capitalist to abandon

his business, and to transfer his wealth to some other country. No doubt a forced sale is a bad sale; and a capitalist in a large way of business will not sell his costly plant at a disadvantage for any light cause. But if he once becomes convinced that he cannot look for a reasonable return; if he once loses confidence in the security of his property, and the consideration of his workmen, he will leave at any cost, and the industries which he has fostered will be ruined.

It may easily be seen, then, that in the efforts which we are making under a system of competition to approximate to that high Christian ideal which at the beginning of this address I laid before you, our motto should be not conflict, but conciliation. The interests of capital and labour are identical. You cannot injure the one without affecting the other. The war of strikes (in extreme cases perhaps necessary) can produce nothing in the ordinary case but mutual loss and exasperation, and the endangering of the national prosperity. As alternatives to such conflicts let us, my reverend brethren, encourage all attempts at profit-sharing and co-operation, and let us do our utmost when industrial misunderstandings arise to promote meetings for mutual explanation and compromise. With the general knowledge now possessed of the prices of commodities and the real rates of profit, it ought never to be impossible to avoid disastrous strifes. Our holy religion should also lend its aid in the blessed

work of the peacemaker. It bids us all to love our neighbours, as children of one Heavenly Father, and brethren of one Divine Saviour. It bids us to be ready to submit to self-sacrifice for the general good, and to take the opportunity of serving our brethren as the best reward for our labours. With this spirit in our heart all the bitter antagonisms of capital and labour of the so-called classes and masses should disappear, and we should be able, slowly indeed, but surely, to overcome that terrible moral disability of individual selfishness, which, more than any physical or economical obstacle, has filled the earth with hate and suffering.

DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,—

TO-DAY I finish the visitation of this Diocese which I began a little more than a year ago. In the course of it I have visited each of our parishes, and have held conferences on the spiritual work of the Church with over 921 clergy, as well as with their lay officers, and others. In each of the Rural Deaneries, with one exception, I have met the Church workers and have consulted them on the best means of improving the helps and removing the hindrances to the successful performance of our common task. To the clergy I have delivered a series of addresses on Church work and doctrine, and I have, besides, catechized primary schools containing more than 200,000 children. I trust that this labour has not been altogether in vain, but that, as it has given to me most valuable information, so also, in some cases, it may have stimulated both clergy and laity to renewed hope and more energetic efforts. As might have been expected, I have found in some

cases slackness and formality. These cases, however, have been far fewer than I had suspected, and on the whole I am glad to report that both clergy and laity, both day school and Sunday School teachers, are working well and faithfully to the extent of their capacity, and are producing a result which is far better than the record of it in the *Church Year Book*.

Over and over again I have asked myself the question, What would be the effect on the moral and spiritual life of Lancashire if this great and penetrating work of the National Church were seriously hindered or impaired? It would be disastrous, no doubt, to lose any considerable portion of our trade, or to suffer any serious check in the progress of our invention and enterprise, but no disaster could be so great or irreparable as a decline in the moral fibre of those admirable workmen who have contributed so largely to give us our industrial supremacy among the nations. May God avert from us so terrible a calamity as that!

In this, my last address to the clergy, I have thought that it might not be without its interest to attempt, however imperfectly, to throw our glance forward into the future, and to ask what may be the probable direction of Christian development in doctrine and effort.

An able American theologian affirmed recently, and no doubt mainly from his knowledge of his own country, that "a large and increasingly larger pro-

portion of good men cannot be called Christian, if to be a Christian means any one or all of those things which it has thus far been defined to mean." "What then," he asks, "is the relation of these people to Christianity?" And he replies, "They are Christians in fact, but they are waiting for Christianity to pass into the new phase which will include them in form."

"Waiting for Christianity to pass into a new phase!" How far, let us ask, is such an anticipation justifiable? What of the new in modern theological thought ought the Christian Church to appropriate, and what of the old must we, through all changes, hold fast? It may help us to give some slightly serviceable answer to this question if we shortly consider the changes of form through which Christian doctrine and life have passed in earlier stages.

As we all know, it became necessary during the first five centuries to state the principal doctrines of the Christian faith in a distinct dogmatic form. This necessity was created not only by the work of the missionary, but also, and much more, by the teaching of the heretic. In its essence, Christianity consisted of the teaching, the life, and the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. The record of these set before the world two things—a certain doctrine about the relation of God to men, and of men to each other; and also the picture of a character and

life in which those relations had been perfectly realized.

It was, and is, the final purpose of the preaching of the Gospel to make men like Christ, and that preaching is successful just in proportion as it forms the reflection of Christ's image in the character and habits of those who hear it. But in order to effect this object it is not enough to give a faithful delineation of what Christ was. The question would still have to be answered, What was it (what peculiarity of nature and principle) which made Him what He was? And thus it became necessary to add to a picture of our Lord's life and character, those instructions upon the relations of God to Himself and mankind which formed the potential elements of His teaching.

And hence arose the main difficulties of the early Christian ages. For the teaching of Christ, however simple in itself, and however admirably adapted to attain its purpose, referred to sacred mysteries which it was equally difficult to ignore and to understand. These fascinated while they baffled the mind. They excited intense intellectual curiosity, and stimulated not merely fitful speculation, but unceasing efforts to bring them within the reach and scope of the finite understanding. In the heat and stir of that intense intellectual activity, it would have been no more possible to silence the early philosophical gnostics, than it would be to-day to

arrest in mid-career the progress of natural science. The Church was therefore obliged to address herself to the burning questions of the hour, and to draw forth into clear, dogmatic statement those mysteries of the faith of which a false or inadequate account had been given by heretical teachers. The work was inevitable; but it was not congenial, nor without its serious practical dangers.

For it is a common experience that when men throw the whole energy of their soul into a particular branch of spiritual activity, they are tempted not only to exaggerate its importance, but also to lose gradually their interest in other pursuits, and even their capacity for prosecuting them. It is thus sometimes amazing, and even pathetic, to discover the incapacity of some specialists in physical science, to perceive the greater philosophical issues which underlie their familiar speculations. In such men as Darwin this incapacity has extended to what looks like the atrophy of the disused faculties.

It ought not, then, to be difficult for us to understand how that utter absorption in theological speculation to which circumstances condemned many of the best minds in the early centuries, had the effect of obscuring for them the relative importance of doctrine and life. Great saints there were, of course, in those ages, as in all ages; but one need know but little of the moral condition of such cities as Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople, to perceive

that those who were so ready to raise sanguinary riots upon some fine point of theological controversy, were as unlike the Divine Master, by whose Name they called themselves, as the very heathen whom they avoided. Absorption in speculation had hidden from them the truth that, except as a means to a practical end, dogma had no abiding value. It was for this reason that the form of Christianity known as orthodoxy (that presented to us most adequately by the Greek Church in our own time), had so little power in many cases to touch the heart and sanctify the life. It represented a spiritual development arrested at the completion of its intellectual stage, an initial effort which so entirely absorbed and exhausted the powers of the mind, that it left no available force for its own practical expression.

As might have been expected, the development of Christian life took a different form when it fell into Roman hands. It became the occasion for building up a vast and powerful ecclesiastical organization. The work of dogmatic thought had been already sufficiently done by the Greek intellect. It was time to bring the interminable controversies of the dogmatic age to a close. What the Christian Church wanted for practical efficiency was unity ; and unity could be attained only by the pressure of a central authority with skill enough to range all available spiritual forces in a practical order, and to assign to each of them its appropriate work. This was just

the task for which the governing instinct of the Romans gave them special fitness. Imposing, however, and irresistibly potent as was the Church organization which their skill and determination created, it had again the faults of its origin and process. The organizer creates nothing. He simply takes the elements which are offered to him by his era, and combines them with a view to their practical efficiency. In thinking, then, of the work which they can be made to do, he is tempted to have regard rather to the amount of that work than to its quality. He wants a powerful machine ; and to make one he takes all those existing beliefs and customs which seem to him to possess disposable energy. If a superstition has a stronger hold upon backward minds than a true Christian belief, he is tempted to utilize the superstition. If a semi-pagan custom is dearer to the heart of a rude people than the pure worship of a more spiritual age, he will keep the former for its attractiveness, even though it imperil the latter.

And thus it was that, with his mind set on practical effectiveness, the Roman organizer built up an ecclesiastical structure which, though not without the gold, silver, and precious stones of Christian truth and life, included nevertheless in its walls and foundations much of the wood hay and stubble of pagan superstition and earthliness. He also forgot in his turn, as the Greek dogmatist had forgotten

before him, that his special work was only valuable as a means to an end ; that Church unity and energy were of little value unless they served to produce in individual Church members the mind and life of Christ. He was so busy in framing his machine, and so proud of its efficiency when made, that he forgot the special work for which the machine had been constructed.

At length, however, the results produced were so glaringly unlike those required by Holy Scripture, and exhibited by the best men, that the organizers felt that they must in some way patch up or supplement their work. The life of the ordinary mediæval Christian was obviously not the life of Christ, but a strange medley of Christian and pagan elements. Could it then be made what it ought to be in the circumstances of ordinary life ?

The best minds of mediæval Christianity thought not. The task of making saints amid such unpromising surroundings seemed too great, and so they declined to undertake it.

If men were to become real Christians, that is, men with a Christ-like character, they must be entirely withdrawn from the common life, and be shut up in institutions where the prevailing violence, sensuality, and earthliness could not reach them. Monasticism thus became a kind of inner court of the ecclesiastical Temple, where its ideal could be more clearly exhibited and more fully realized.

It certainly was a good thing for the rude Christians of the outer world to have that ideal so clearly set before them. Many a robber knight, I doubt not, as he rode at eventide beneath the gray walls of the monastery, felt the lustful violence and rapacity of his ordinary life rebuked, and might even dream of the coming time when, with the decline of strength or under the stroke of calamity, he too would pass into the silent life, and try to become more like Christ before he went to the eternal judgment-seat. It was thus better to have the great object-lesson of the monasteries than to have no embodied vision of the Christian life at all.

But the dangers and inconveniences of this makeshift system are so obvious that they scarcely need a passing mention. When the most spiritually-minded individuals of a society were withdrawn from it, and called specially "the religious," the rest must certainly become ever more drily secular, and more hopelessly degraded. And on the other hand, when good men exchanged the life of free service for that of formal restraint; when, in the round of their daily duties, the redemption of the sinful and miserable found no place (save, indeed, as a subject of intercession, or an affair of alms), monks inevitably became, first, selfish in seeking their own salvation, and then formal in the slavery of an unchanging routine; and, lastly, hypocritical, in the substitution of sloth for prayer, and of gluttony for asceticism.

Organization had thus no more availed to save the world than had speculation. It might, indeed, be true that both were necessary as means to an end; but then both had forgotten the end in attention to the means. And thus, at the dawn of the Reformation, the Christian world was as far from having made men Christ-like, as it had been at the close of the period of speculation.

Feeling, then, the need of a new effort, the Christian Church made one:—an effort this time decidedly in the right direction.

Religion, whether within the cloister or without it, was too much an affair of organization. People were religious in the mass. The acts of piety were mainly collective acts. A man thought he had performed his duty when he had attended some public religious function, or complied with some formal religious requirement.

The Reformers saw, therefore, that it was necessary to make religion more inward and personal. They sought its source accordingly in a mystical union between the soul and Christ; and found its exercise not so much in outward acts, as in an exalted and purified state of the affections. Hence the immense importance ascribed in all movements originating from the Reformation to that act of faith by which the individual soul connects itself with Christ—to that crisis of conversion through which, as most of the later evangelical

revivalists conceived, the soul passed into the heavenly life.

Assuredly, some such movement as this was needed to spiritualize the common life, to break down the sharp separation between the secular and the religious, and to bring the hind and the mechanic, not less than the monk and the friar, into conscious communion with God.

But once again, the violent reaction against a perceived abuse concentrated attention too exclusively on its direct antithesis. What the mediæval Christian life had lacked appeared to many to be something more than the necessary source of religion—to be religion itself. And men were often so absorbed in seeking mystical communion with Christ, or in enjoying and describing the blessedness thence resulting, that they forgot or despised that life of active self-denial and service, of which it was appointed that this emotional exaltation should be the motive force. Once again the means were put for the end, and even (in extreme cases of antinomianism) set in opposition to the end.

In former times the separation between the religious and the secular had been represented by a division of classes. But now that separation became in many cases more thorough, and, if possible, more pernicious. The religious might be so separated from the secular life in individual souls, that the same man might be found at once fervently pious and

selfishly worldly, or even openly immoral. The religious life, in fact, was confined so largely to the supernatural sphere that it left the old unresolved pagan selfishness to riot almost unchecked in the relations of ordinary life. The fervid religious sentimentalist might thus be a bad father, a sharp trader, an oppressive master, or an unamiable man. He might know much about the mysteries of dogma, or the ecstasies of religious feeling, but he was not a true Christian, because he was not like Christ.

To-day, we are more or less conscious not only of the imperfection of these successive forms of Christian life, but also of the cause of that imperfection. We see that it arose in each case from arrested development, from the substitution of means for ends. More and more clearly we are beginning to perceive to-day that the Gospel has not done its work until it has made men like Christ, like Him not only in their thoughts and feelings, but also in their life and character. The widening thought, the enlarging affections, even the social difficulties of our modern existence are convincing us that what used to be called counsels of perfection are the only practical counsels; that in spite of the protests of worldly wisdom and enlightened selfishness, we must seek to make the Sermon on the Mount our code of ethics, and the example of Jesus of Nazareth our rule of action. It may take decades, or even centuries, to accomplish this, for our ordinary thoughts and acts

are so unlike those of the Lord Jesus, that to seek a place for them even in such a society as ours, may well seem to many the part of a fanatic. Still, if the infinite force behind phenomena be indeed the will to love, it is as certain as life or death that the only way to make men noble and happy is the way of self-sacrificing love.

And men are seeing this more and more. The belief of it is in the air. That belief finds partial utterance in the very cries of the unbelieving mob. It has laid a firm hold of some of the noblest and most energetic spirits in our midst—the destined makers of the coming age. It is, in a word, the ideal, the character of Jesus, and nothing else, which all the mightiest spiritual forces of our time are combining to realize. Many of these, it is true, are blind forces, unconscious equally of their origin and true tendency. But more, on the other hand, than in any former age, the Church is consciously realizing her proper duty and vocation. She has to live the life of Christ herself, and to induce and enable all men to live it. So far as she falls short of this, she falls short of the accomplishment of her mission. Her apprehension of dogmatic truth, her organization of spiritual forces, her mystical communion with Christ Himself, are nothing more than means to this end, and fail of their appointed purpose and fruition unless they attain it. It is this clear recognition of the Gospel as the rule and power of ordinary life,

which is above all things distinctive of the Church to-day.

But now, once again, we have to be warned of the danger of partial views and limited endeavours. It is not, however, arrested development which we have now to fear, but the opposite error, forgetfulness of the prevenient conditions of success. In former times men forgot the end in defining or attaining the means. To-day they are tempted to overlook the means in concentrating attention upon the end. How many of our economic reformers, for example, assume that if only the majority will and decree it, they are perfectly able to realize the conditions of a fraternal life. Experience indeed—especially the prolonged experience of experiments in co-operative production—has conclusively demonstrated the baselessness of this belief. And yet with many, a belief it continues to be. If only, they urge, certain social hindrances were removed, and certain details of organization improved, men, as they are, could realize the dreams of economic visionaries like Robert Owen. I am not concerned to deny the value of favouring circumstances, but I affirm, without any misgiving, that we must seek the principal cause of the failure of our most hopeful efforts in the lack of those spiritual qualities which alone can make liberty safe, equality orderly, or fraternity just. Such qualities cannot be made to order. Time alone can create them and bring them

to maturity. Before they can form the basis of practical action, a generation which has imbibed something of the spirit of love must bequeath its development to others, who, successively securing, deepening, and extending it, may succeed at last in embodying it in an appropriate social organization.

It is a commonplace of philosophic historians that the main factor in national progress is the creation of a public character which can bear improvement. And yet how seldom, in forming an estimate of a people's present outlook, is account taken of this necessary condition. Wealth, knowledge, numbers—these can be easily computed, because they belong to the sphere of sense. But the spirit of a people, its piety, its justice, its capacity for self-sacrifice, because it belongs to the invisible region of the soul, is too often regarded as something vague and visionary. No mistake could be greater or more pernicious. For the spirit of a race, as of a man, is the seat of all its habitual thoughts, impulses, and volitions. It is the invisible centre where all these are stored and accumulated. It is the real seat of national potency and promise. It was no mere dream of Cardinal Newman that he could feel in the Rome of to-day the presence and pressure of the pagan empire. The old temples might be in ruins, the old worship might be forgotten, but the pagan ethos, the lust of power and predominance, the belief in policy and force

as the best means of gaining and keeping predominance—these things have lived on in human souls through all the storms and changes of 3,000 years. Material things were powerless to resist the Goth and the Hun. But the spirit of old Rome was invincible, and it rules the children of those barbarian conquerors to-day, from the ancient seat of its dominion. Only spirit can war with spirit; only spirit can grapple that secret, intangible, but most potent energy which is seated in the depths of the human will. And that is why the strong proud spirit of pagan selfishness could only be overcome, so far as it was overcome, by the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

What then is that spirit? Is it like that of Pagan Rome, or Mohammedan Arabia, simply the realized character of a community, transmitted, and hardened in transmission, through many generations of believers? No doubt it is this; but is it nothing more? If so, then although it cannot be less than a most formidable force, it must still, like all the greatest human things, be subject to decay and mortality. If it be only human, then although its reign may be long, it cannot be eternal. He who sees nothing more in the spirit of Christ than the loving self-determination of a body of men, who, having caught the enthusiasm of a mighty prophet, have striven to embody his principles in their thought and life, will be unable to hear without

distrust the sanguine anticipations of the New Testament. Jesus may have cried in the enthusiasm of a grand discovery, "I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all men unto Me." He may have declared in some moment of confident exaltation, "All power is given to Me in heaven and earth." But still the sad fact remains that what depends on man may be corrupted by man; and thus the grandest corporate realization of moral and religious life which the earth has witnessed may go the way, after all, of the great faiths of the past.

But is the Spirit of Jesus Christ no more than this? Is it nothing more than the Divine faith and character of the greatest Man who ever lived, more or less perfectly realized in the life of His Church? That, at least, was not the teaching of the Lord Jesus Himself. If nothing survived of that teaching but the simple baptismal formula which the Church has used from the beginning, we should be sure that in our Lord's apprehension the promise of the Father was nothing less than a Divine Person. How could we set the name of the Holy Spirit beside that of the Father and the Son without blasphemy, in the very rite of Christian initiation, if the Spirit were no more than a name for a human quality or character? Encountering the name of the Holy Spirit where we find it, we expect our Lord to call Him "the Comforter, whom the Father will send in My Name."

Did our Lord again ever use the words, "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come to you"? Must we not then ask the question, "If the Spirit of Jesus were nothing more than an impulse, an insight, a character caught from Him, how could it be better for His disciples that the source and stay of these things should be removed? To give any tolerable meaning to such words we must surely assume, as the Holy Apostles teach us, that the Spirit is a Divine Person, moving over the dark chaos of man's soul with creative might, infusing into its dead elements the life of Christ, and abiding in the Church as His earthly Temple, down all the generations.

It is just this great truth which in the latest movement of Christian thought we may be tempted to overlook. In our eagerness to make men like Christ, we may forget that this result can only be produced by the Divine Spirit of Christ.

And yet, can anything less than this assumption either account for the spiritual triumphs of the past, or form a reasonable basis for our confident hope of the future? What is the secret of the stubborn vitality of the imperishable Jewish race? Surely nothing less than this: that the unseen power which it carries in its heart is that Spirit of God which spake by the prophets, and which one day, when the discipline of Israel's exile is completed, shall guide it

home again to the Christ. Or what, again, is the secret power which, in the long conflict between the Christian and pagan spirit, has won all the victories which, so far, love has achieved—the abolition of slavery, the elevation of woman, the humanizing of war, the service of the sick and poor and sinful? Is it anything else than that “Promise of the Father,” who was to “convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment”?

What right, again, have we alone, of all the societies and Churches of earth, to be so stubbornly optimistic about the future? to believe, in spite of appearances, that God has decreed “a day of the restitution of all things”? that all things shall be subdued to Christ, and that, in the fulness of the times, there shall be set upon the brow once pierced by thorns the many crowns of all earth’s various sovereignties? What, in the midst of all our social confusions and intellectual misgivings, can justify a faith like this but the sure intuition that there dwells within the Church of Christ as its light and strength and inspiration an Almighty Divine Power which nothing can resist—a will of love which is omnipotent. Believing that, we are superior to all fear and misgiving. No doubt, as in the days of the author of Daniel’s prophecy, so in ours, the earth shakes beneath the tread of mighty hosts; and arrogant powers, counting their battalions by the million, speak as if the future depended on their

will. It is a huge mistake. As of old, the future belongs to the force which is unseen and spiritual. Not the lion with his roar along the deep; not the Western leopard with its deadly spring; not the Eastern bear with the ribs of its Jewish prey between its teeth; not even that fourth beast, newly sprung from the sea of the nations, fierce and terrible, with its policy of blood and iron; not any of these, but the Son of Man with His deep eyes of redeeming counsel, and His heart of pity for all sins and woes, is the destined Heir of the ages.

A longer experience of the great war between flesh and spirit has but added to our assurance of this truth. The greatest earthly empires have come and gone. The Roman legions have thundered by into oblivion. The crescent, after blazing a while with threatening glare against the western sky, has sunk into darkness. The invincible battalions of Napoleon have passed into a portentous memory. But through all these changes, through all the varying glow and gloom of their succession, the Church of the lowly Son of Man has grown, and spread, and strengthened, because it carried in its heart the Almighty Spirit of Christ's love. While, then, holding fast the great Gospel of our time, that nothing is done until men have been transformed into the likeness of Christ, let us cling with equal tenacity to the complementary truth, that the only power by which this result can be achieved, by which

men can be Christianized in life and character, and renewed in the spirit of their mind after the likeness of Him who redeemed them, is the power of that Holy Spirit whose office it is "to take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us."

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